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Why Is Maureen Dowd So Angry? **By Michael Wolff**

FEBRUARY 1, 1999

NEW YORK®

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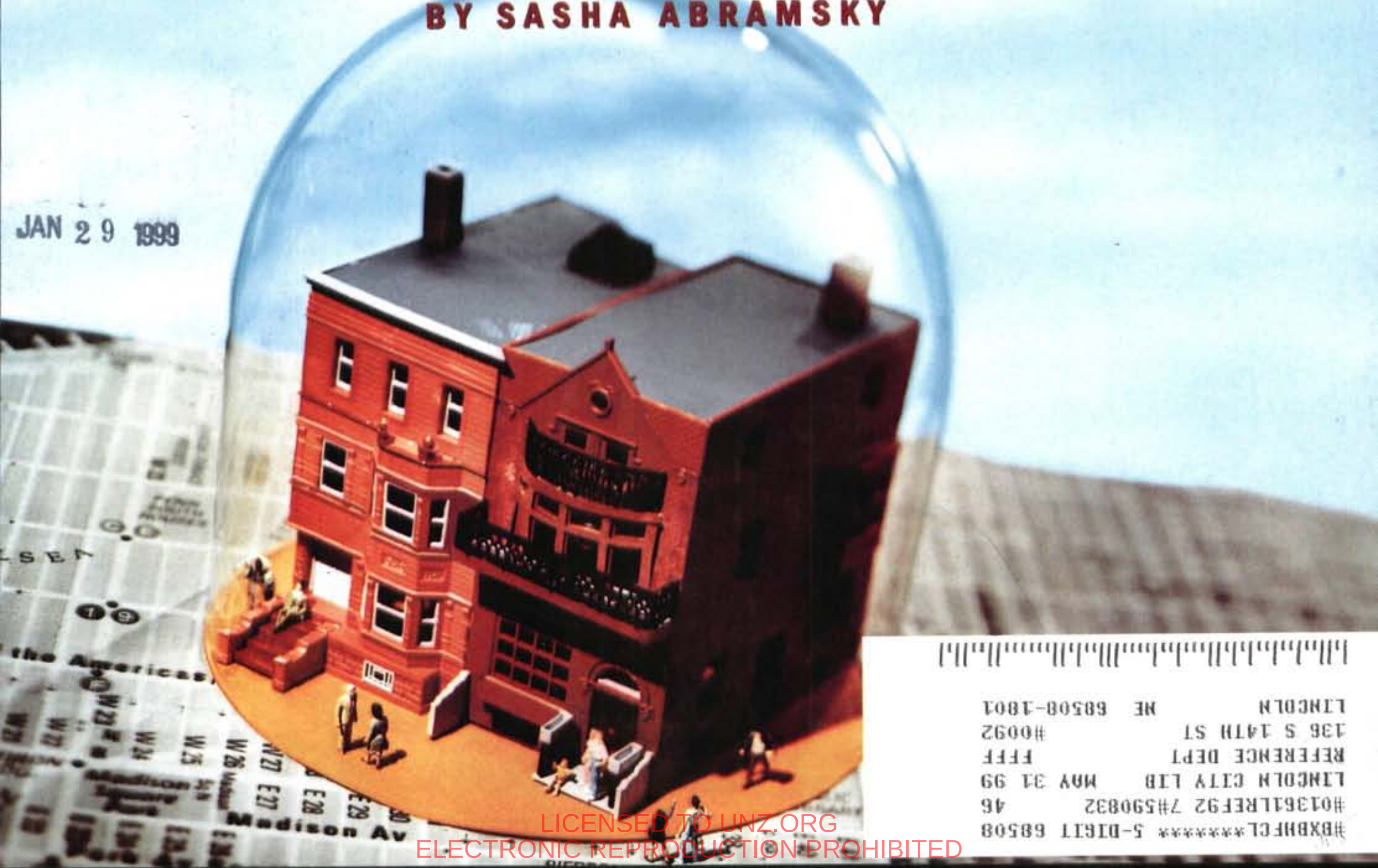
The Status Quo Seekers

A new army of activists is swarming the city. Their cause? To protect their neighborhoods—from bars, restaurants, movie theaters, even toy stores.

BY SASHA ABRAMSKY



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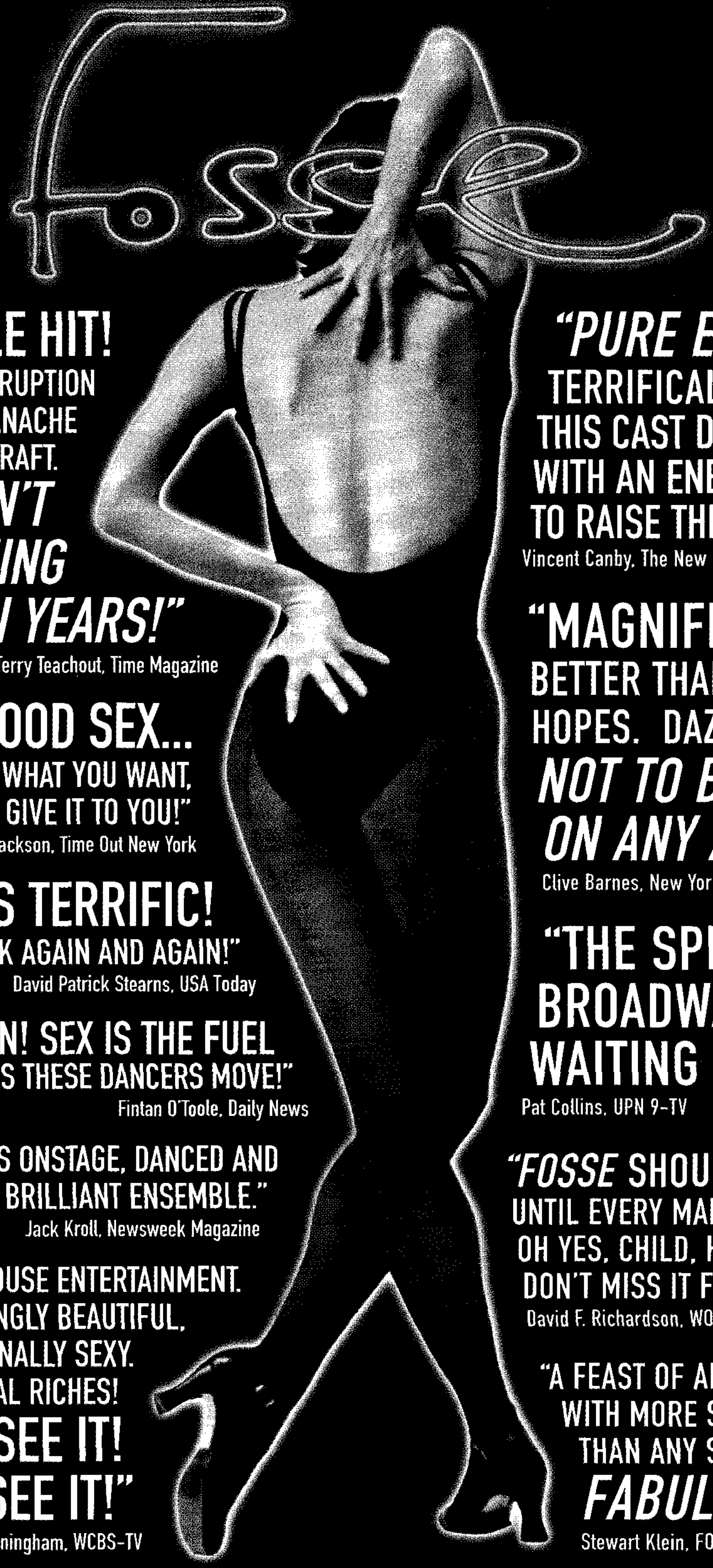
"SETS BROADWAY ON FIRE!"

Stewart Klein, FOX 5-TV



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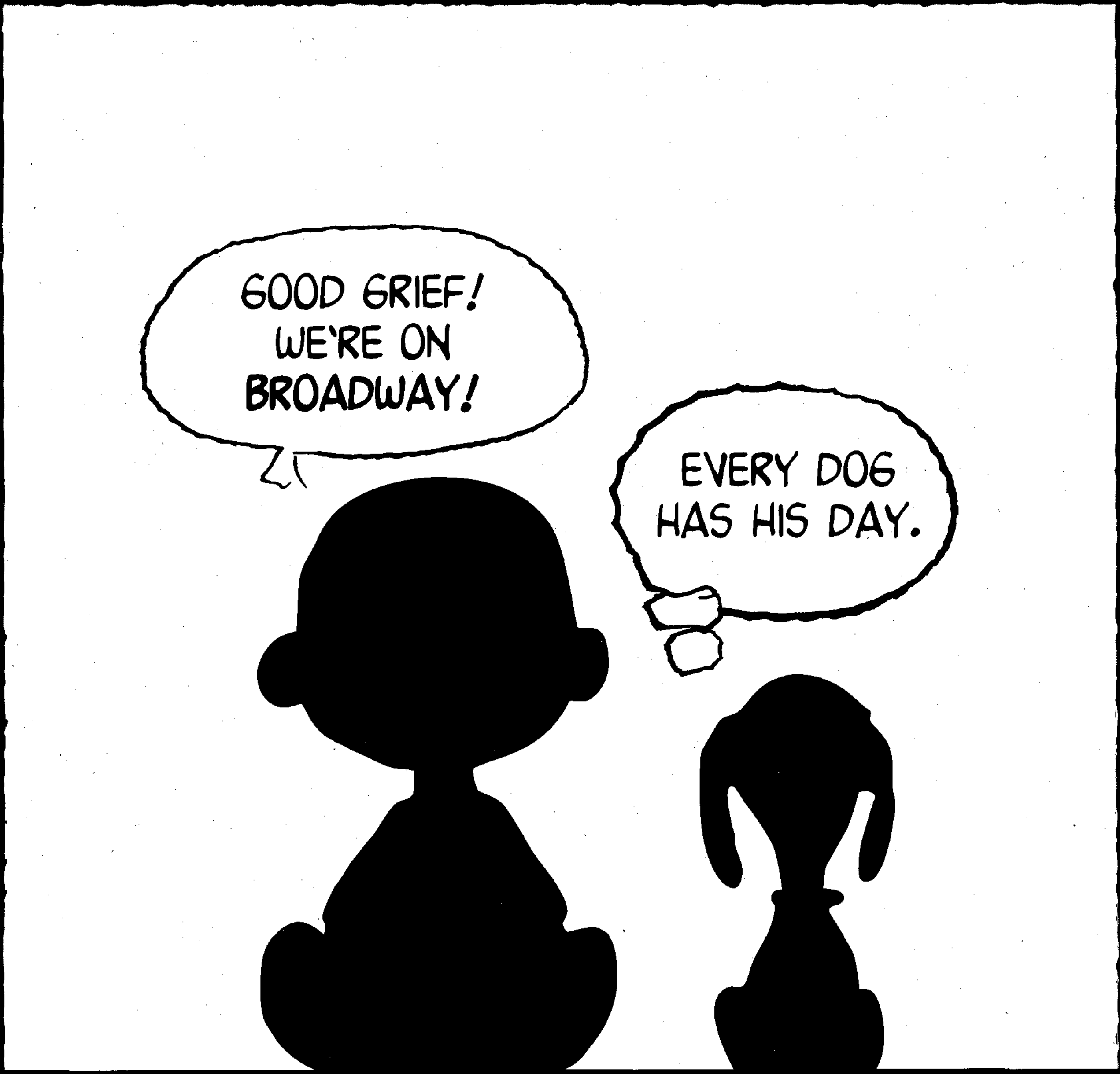
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> *"I was once asked to bring a lawsuit against outdoor cafés. I like outdoor cafés. It gives the city a European feel. That's where I part company with my brother and sister activists."*
>
> ATTORNEY JACK LESTER, PAGE 22

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By Sasha Abramsky

The streets are clean, quiet, crime-free—and residents are determined to keep them that way, nixing clubs, grocery stores, movie theaters, even toy stores. How a growing army of quality-of-life activists and a cadre of gadfly lawyers is battling commercial enterprises of every stripe.

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Gael Greene and John Simon have been calling them as they see 'em since *New York*'s earliest days. Over lunch at The Four Seasons, they dish three decades of dining, drama, and other indiscretions.

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By Jennifer Senior

Physicist Brian Greene's lectures on string theory are the hottest ticket on the Columbia campus, and his book *The Elegant Universe* is compulsively readable. Explaining the seductively named "Theory of Everything" in comprehensible terms, Greene threatens to do for string theory what Stephen Hawking did for black holes. Did we say the professor's also *very* cute?

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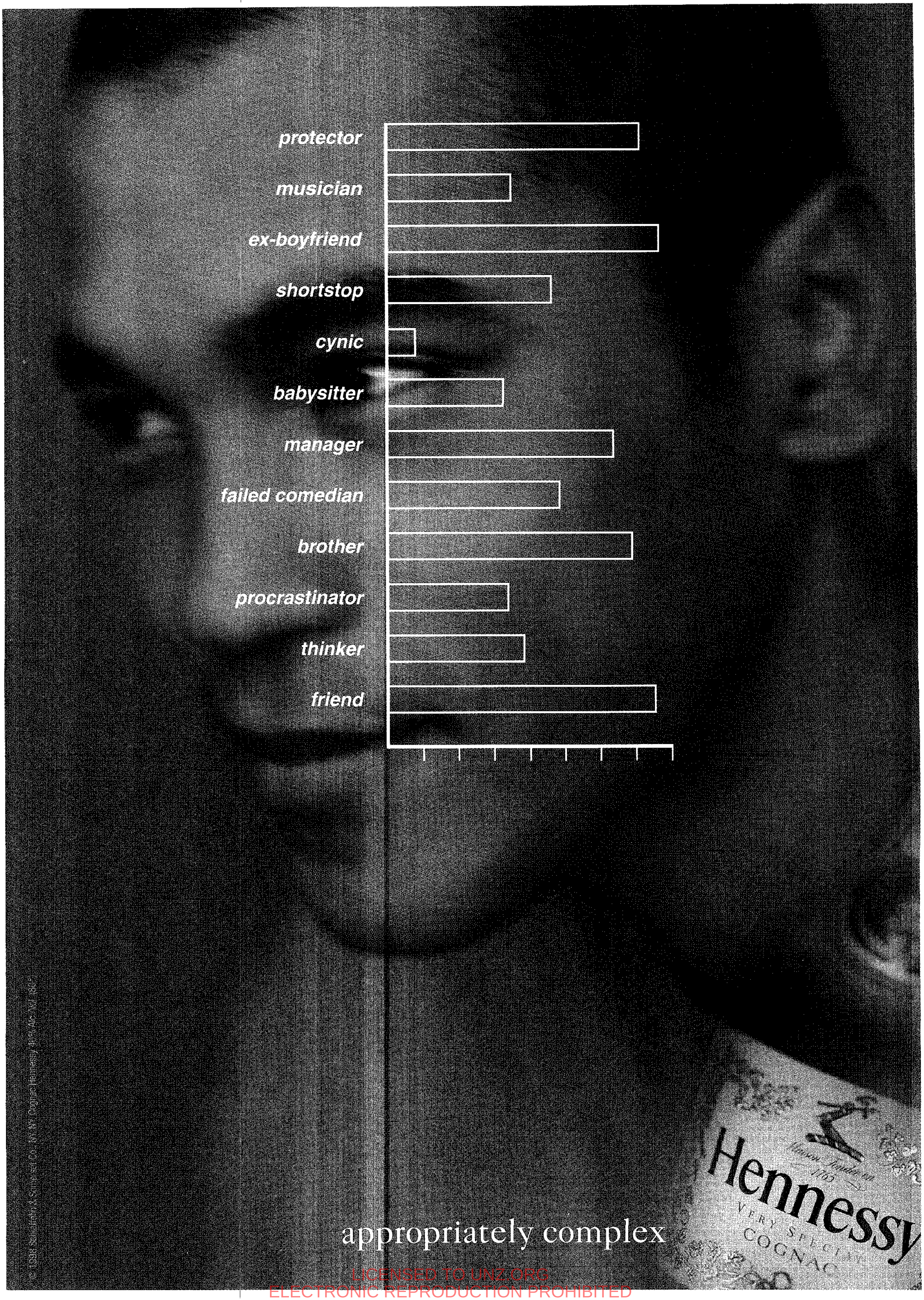
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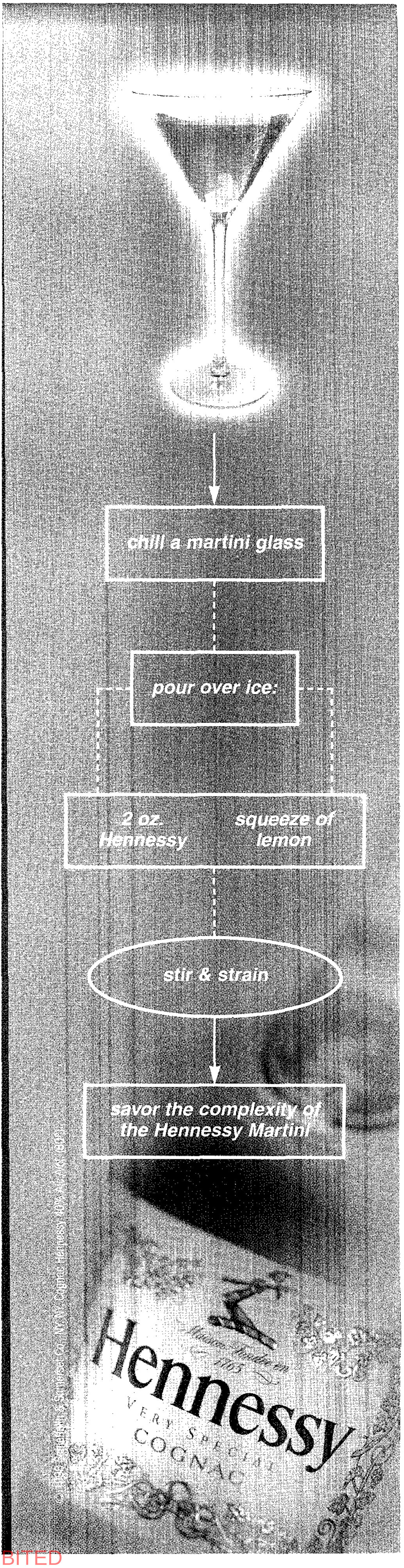

Changed Man

Ariel Sharon hasn't made a peaceful transition; a hidden message in Kristine Kupka's story?

LUCINDA FRANKS'S ACCEPTING PORtrait of Israeli general Ariel Sharon shows a man incapable of the soul-searching that transformed Yitzhak Rabin into a peacemaker ["The Warrior's Peace," January 4]. How natural, then, that Sharon is quick to present his attack on Egyptian forces during a 1973 cease-fire as an example of tactical genius. For Sharon, "peace" with the Palestinians has meant pacification by any means, coupled with a relentless landgrab through settlement expansion. It's an ideology that's an election away from being swept up by the inevitable: an end to Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands and the establishment of a Palestinian state—with the next Israeli government's blessing—on the West Bank and Gaza, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Roger Gaess
MANHATTAN

I BELIEVE IN THE PEACE PROCESS. WHEN Netanyahu brought Sharon into the process, I was concerned. I had never thought I'd see Nixon in China as part of a peace process, nor had I thought Sharon would be part of the peace process. But it seems that Lucinda Franks insightfully presents a viewpoint that it can work. Sharon's *is* a warrior's peace. I especially enjoyed the descriptions of what happened at Wye: Albright's anger; Netanyahu's demand that Clinton cancel his trip to Gaza; the relationship between Netanyahu and Sharon; and, of course, our president's towering presence, which was necessary for everything. Frank's article made me feel like I was there, and I thank her for that.

Meyer A. Berman
MANHATTAN

Subtext

I WAS FURIOUS WHEN I READ SHEILA WELler's "The Vanishing," about the disappearance of Kristine Kupka [January 11]. It reads like a cautionary tale about what happens to nice white people, especially women, when they get involved with nefarious ethnic types. Weller states the race of every nonwhite person featured in her article. (I guess even with the millennium approaching, nonwhites are still considered "other" and must be appropriately highlighted.) *What does race have to do with Kristine Kupka's disappearance?* I suspect that the only answer is that the article is a veritable template for barely sublimated racism.

Also, it is unethical for *New York* to have disclosed Mr. and Mrs. Rudy Persaud's daily routine. Anyone who read the article could find them tomorrow. Is that proper journalistic behavior in a city with as many volatile personalities as New York?

Dwayne R. Rodgers
BROOKLYN

Editor's note: The ethnic differences between Kupka, a Midwesterner, and Persaud, a Guyanese immigrant, were included in the story because they were key to the disagreement between the two about the appropriateness of her continuing her pregnancy. Far from demonizing Persaud as a "nefarious ethnic type," the story described him as "respectable," "clean-cut," "honest," and "naïve."

Book Smart

I ENJOYED MICHAEL WOLFF'S ARTICLE ON James Atlas ["Media: Atlas Shrugs," January 18], with one caveat: It seems to me to show not that "intellectuals are without the wherewithal and skills to find opportunity in the new economic order" but that the new economy is without the wherewithal to properly valuate intellectual creativity and capital. Of course, there's the sad converse: Things are worth precisely, and only, what people are willing to pay for them.

Jeffrey M. Gross
BROOKLYN

Fair Play

NOT ONLY DID REPUBLICANS FORGIVE THE lies of Oliver North, as Michael Tomasky points out, but they cheered when President Bush pardoned Casper Wein-

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berger and five others charged with perjury in 1992 ["The National Interest: The Oliver Twist," January 11]. The timing of those pardons on Christmas Eve showed true compassion, and contrasts with the hatred of Clinton just before Christmas. Has any other Christian leader besides the Reverend Billy Graham said he forgives Clinton?

Jerry Steinman
WEST NYACK, N.Y.

Extra Intelligence

I DON'T THINK THAT STELLA MCCARTNEY should be knocked for voicing criticism about a fur trade ["Intelligencer: The Not-So-Rockin' New McCartney Video," January 18]. She may not yet be in a position to influence the whole Vendome Luxury Group, but she is at least making a start. Your description of PETA's tactics of "dumping a dead raccoon on Anna Wintour's lunch plate" as "shocking" sounds melodramatic when compared with your description of "a fur ranch in which caged, starving foxes are driven to cannibalism and animals are electrocuted for their skin." Slightly more shocking for the abused animals, I would think.

S. Free
MANHATTAN

I WAS APPALLED WHEN I READ ABOUT THE tragic incident involving Patricia Wexler's Manolo Blahniks and eight inches of rainwater at the Four Seasons Hotel in Nevis ["Intelligencer: Nevis Even Has Haute Driftwood," January 18]. It is bad enough that this small island of 9,000 people is being exploited by the Four Seasons and other hotels, but even more distressing that, while many Nevisians were homeless for days, Wexler was laughing at her shoes floating "like little boats on the canal." Perhaps this is a source of entertainment for some high-paying guests, but after spending the past summer in Nevis doing community-service work, I must say that Nevisians would have appreciated the donation of one of Wexler's Manolos. Wet or dry.

Meredith Sadin
MANHATTAN

Clarifications The specific model of watch referred to in "Flaunting It" [Wall Street issue, January 18] has been discontinued. But Franck Muller's 7501 DSL, which has the same functions, is available for $24,000.

Director Elia Kazan did testify before the HUAC, but not before Senator Joseph McCarthy ["Gotham: Lefties Get Red Hot," January 25]. ▬

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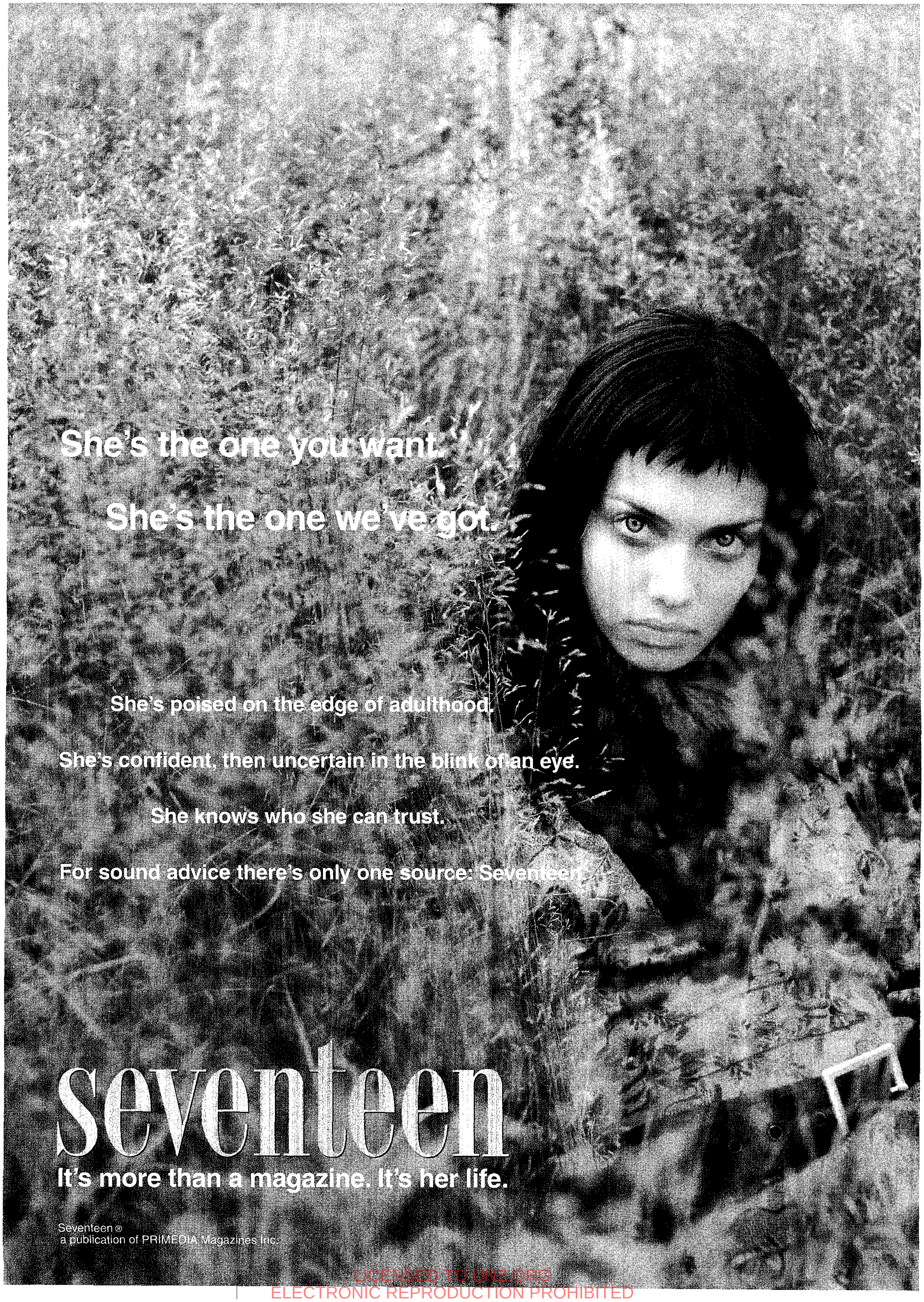

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BY BETH LANDMAN KEIL AND DEBORAH MITCHELL

INTELLIGENCER

TAKING BUICK UP TO CRUISE SPEED

Advertising juggernaut McCann-Erickson WorldGroup is trying to become decidedly more glamorous. Sources say the $10 billion workhorse—already the world's largest ad agency, with clients like Buick, Exxon, and Motorola—has its heart set on buying PMK, arguably the shiniest of P.R. houses, with **Tom Cruise**, **Matt Damon**, **Sharon Stone**, and **Tom Hanks** among its illustrious ranks. Both companies admit they've had meetings, but both deny that any deal has been struck. While such a takeover would add a measure of security to a company that deals with the mercurial entertainment industry, the principals are clearly wary of corporate ways. **Leslee Dart**, part-owner of PMK, says that a "partner" that would let PMK run autonomously might be welcome, adding, "What we love most is dealing daily with the clients and the press. We will never allow that to change, but we're always willing to talk. Why wouldn't we be?"

THE LAMBS AREN'T SILENT ON CPW

Was it a dispute over a terrace that led a Central Park West co-op board to turn down **Mike Nichols** and **Diane Sawyer**'s bid for **Calvin Klein**'s apartment—or a fat broker's commission? **Stephen Rabinowitz**, the attorney for Nichols and Sawyer, confirmed for the New York *Observer* that the board demanded $1 million for the terrace next to Klein's apartment—and that the power couple agreed to pay, raising their offer from $7.5 million to $8.5 million. "After Mike and Diane had a signed contract," Rabinowitz told *New York*, broker **Jeff Lamb** called, trying to entice the media stars to make a few bucks selling the apartment they didn't yet officially own. "But they didn't want to do that deal," Rabinowitz says. Lamb's client is record exec **Steve Gottlieb**—who, now that Nichols and Sawyer have been turned down, has an all-but-signed contract to buy the apartment for $8.6 million (although another buyer has emerged at $8.7 million, according to one building insider). Lamb's brother is **Craig Lamb**, who manages the building and should have influence with the board. Klein's broker, **Roger Erickson**, refused to comment, as did both Lambs. Another real-estate source asks, "Why would it be about the terrace if Mike was going to pay the million for the terrace? Perhaps Gottlieb got the deal because Craig Lamb's brother was his broker." Perhaps, indeed: Jeff Lamb's 3 percent commission adds up to a tidy $258,000.

WHERE MICK GETS HIS SUITS PRESSED

If **Luciana Gimenez Morad** (below) and **Jerry Hall** (right) ever want to spend some quality time together, all they have to do is visit their lawyers. In her £30 million divorce suit against **Mick Jagger**, Hall has retained one of London's most feared divorce attorneys, **Sandra Davis** of Mishcon de Reya, while Morad's £5 million paternity slap against the reckless rocker will be delivered by **Raoul Felder**, the New York *Über*-lawyer who's done cases for Mishcon de Reya and still uses the company's offices when he's in London. Felder did in fact run into members of Hall's legal team when he met with Morad at the de Reya office earlier this month, but, he says, "we didn't trade notes." And in case Mick is worrying that a financially deadly alliance is mounting against him, Felder insists that "lawyers don't share secrets. We talked more about **Bill Clinton**'s sex life than Mick's."

THE *COSMO* GIRL: YOUNGER THAN EVER

Parents, beware: The magazine that told women HOW TO HAVE A BETTER ORGASM and 10 WAYS TO MAKE HIM MOAN is coming for your daughters. *Cosmopolitan,* the premier purveyor of sex-obsessed text and bulging-breast photos, is launching a junior edition especially for teenagers, sources say. Hearst Magazines, *Cosmo*'s publisher, confirmed that Hearst "has been looking at the teen market for a long time." But of possible Hearst efforts to give teenyboppers a crash

MCNALLY'S NEW PROLETARIAN POLICY

Keith McNally is at it again. The restaurateur who brought us Odeon, Cafe Luxembourg, Nell's, Lucky Strike, Pravda, and Balthazar is at work on another bistro in the new, heavily Belgian restaurant row—the unglamorously monikered meatpacking district. This spot, slated to open in October, will be lower-priced than Balthazar, serving breakfast, lunch, and supper till 3 or 4 A.M., with an emphasis on heartier dishes like stews and gratins. McNally was attracted to the location—the corner of Little West 12th Street and Ninth Avenue—because of the old cobblestone square and expanse of sky. "There are no tall buildings. It looks like something out of Budapest," says McNally, who insists that this will be a working-class bistro for locals. Quips McNally about his new site, "If the meat delivery is late, you'll *know* we're having problems."

Photographs: clockwise from top right, Stephane Cardinale/Sygma; Patrick McMullan; Robin Platzer/Twin Images; Michael Zinn/Sygma.

YIDDISH IS NOT A TIME-HONORED LANGUAGE

While most respectable publishers ban a mere handful of words as being unsuitable for print, the ever-diligent powers that be at Time Inc. have added a few thousand new no-nos to the list—just the entire Yiddish language. Sources say Time Inc. editor-in-chief **Norman Pearlstine** has dissuaded his writers from using the age-old language that has given us such indispensables as *tchotchke, shtick,* and *schmuck.* "I think it's pretty silly myself," says one *Time* magazine insider. "It's rather ironic at this point, when so much of that language has become part of our language. Maybe [Pearlstine]'s trying to keep things . . . oh, I don't know." Pearlstine says there is no official prohibition against Yiddish but admits he frowns on its usage: "It's not about Yiddish per se; I feel the same way about Latin. I have a strong preference for using English in English-language publications. I don't particularly like *voilà* or *d'accord,* or *meshugge* instead of *crazy.*" Pearlstine also insists that if a writer absolutely has to use Yiddish, he or she must understand it, explaining, "If you call someone a *putz,* you should know it doesn't just mean a stupid person."

course in sex ed, the nervous spokesperson would say only that "*Cosmo*'s involvement has not been determined."

WILBUR ROSS TAKES STOCK IN THE JOHN

Wilbur Ross knows the value of a well-timed bathroom break. The Rothschild banker, who's divorcing failed politico **Betsy McCaughey Ross**, is also in a legal battle over money with ex No. 1, **Judith Ross**. That fight centers on when Wilbur transferred some stock to Judith, who claims it lost half its value by the time she got it. During a recent deposition, Judith's attorney, **Bernard Clair**, asked Wilbur pointed questions about three letters he wrote in 1995 requesting that his firm transfer the stock to Judith as soon as possible. Two of the notes date from October, but they're scrawled in his own handwriting, and Wilbur testified that he didn't use Rothschild letterhead because it was personal business. But a month later, he had no problem using the firm's stationery and secretaries to type up the third letter—which, oddly, doesn't cite the two earlier requests. Clair pressed Wilbur for the name of the Rothschild banker to whom he'd sent the first two memos. Then Clair whispered to a clerk who promptly left the room, presumably to call that banker. That's when Wilbur interrupted the proceedings, saying he had to go to the bathroom, says a source at the deposition. But before he made it to the john, the eyewitness adds, Betsy's soon-to-be-ex took a detour to use the phone himself. When the deposition resumed, Wilbur admitted that he had, in fact, called the banker, explaining that he was merely asking him to "cooperate" with Clair. It seems that nature's call—and Wilbur's—came at just the right time.

BAER WON'T SIT; BETSEY IN SPLIT

THE BAER FACTS: Hard as it is to believe, not everyone who works at the White House has had to spend time in front of a grand jury. Former White House communications director **Don Baer**, now a television executive at Discovery Communications, is one of the fortunate few senior White House officials who have never had to testify. But he recently had a brush of a different sort with a grand jury. D.C. resident Baer got a notice to serve in the district, according to a Beltway source. "He wrote a letter explaining that if the grand jury was about any of the White House scandals, he should be disqualified because he had worked with those people for the last three and a half years," says the source, who adds that the media exec has been excused. For now. Baer refused to comment, saying, with a laugh, that he didn't want to tempt fate.

UNTYING THE KNOT: Betsey Johnson's last marriage may have been as offbeat as her line of clothing. Johnson and her third husband, a globe-trotting computer-biz retiree, are getting divorced after just a year and a half of wedded bliss—but they're not necessarily breaking up. Describing their legal disentanglement as "a super-amiable change of arrangements," a Johnson spokesperson assures "Intelligencer" that the two have been a couple for nine years and that they'll remain together. Or maybe not exactly *together,* since Johnson's not-so-ex divides his time among London, Jamaica, and San Francisco, while Johnson lives here. "We got into a tough, traveling, East Coast–West Coast relationship, which finally didn't work out," says Johnson. "We still love each other and we're going to stay very close."

Additional reporting by Ian Spiegelman.

THE PETER PRINCIPLE HITS DIVORCE COURT

Let's hope that Ambassador **Peter Tufo** gets the New York tabloids at the embassy in Hungary. Reading about **Ron Perelman**'s travails in court just might dissuade him from playing hardball in his own messy divorce from writer **Francesca Stanfill**. Right now, it looks like the warring couple is heading to trial, and the issue will be his adultery, according to her friends. "He's trying to put the screws to her financially," claims one Stanfill intimate. When the ambassador leaves Hungary for New York, he very undiplomatically insists upon staying at the marital home, the friend continues. But Tufo has friends, too. "He was an excellent husband and he's a great father," says one of them. "Why would anyone want to accuse someone of [philandering] if it weren't to embarrass him and to exchange dirt for funds?" Meanwhile, Stanfill is starting to go out again. Last week, she attended a WNET fund-raiser with *New Yorker* editor **Charles Michener**, and she's been seen at lunch with financier **Richard Nye**, although everyone agrees that she's not dating anyone now. Her attorney, **Robert Stephan Cohen**, refused to comment. Tufo's lawyer, **Norman Sheresky**, says, "This case should not be tried at all—nor should it be tried in the press."

Photographs: left, Robin Platzer/Twin Images; right, Henry McGee/Globe Photos.

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GOTHAM

Time-Bomb Hotel

A gentrifying East Village SRO is about to erupt.

GUY JACOBSON STEPS out of his office at the Hotel Regina and sniffs the air. "Somebody left the gas on again," he says, pulling a tweed sport coat onto his six-foot-five frame and heading toward the exit. "One of these days, somebody's gonna light a cigarette at the wrong second, and we'll all be blown to smithereens." As if on cue, an elderly woman appears, a bag of groceries in her right hand and a king-size filter-tip dangling from her lips. "Do me a favor, would you, Shirley?" he asks. "Put that out outside. Somebody eft the gas on." Shirley tosses the butt to the slushy sidewalk and glances up at the falling snow. "It's not a good day to go," she says cheerfully.

Jacobson's hotel—four conjoined tenement buildings on the corner of Third Avenue and 13th Street—is one of sixteen privately owned SROs the city pays $16 per head per night to provide temporary shelter to people burned out of or otherwise displaced from their apartments. While city housing officials try to return these "relocatees" to permanent apartments within eighteen months, many have been at the Regina far longer. Jacobson gets along well enough with many of his 105 tenants—some even greet him with hugs and kisses when they run into him—but the gas incident is part of a state of open warfare that exists between the landlord and some of the others.

When Jacobson bought the Regina a year ago, the place harbored at least two major drug-dealing operations, as well as numerous petty criminals. The police were called to the hotel an average of four times a day. Jacobson vowed to clean things up, while getting rid of most of the tenants as quickly as the law allowed. Such conversions have been increasingly common in the past two decades: lots of SROs like the Regina, which have historically served a class of people with few, if any, other housing options, have been converted to more profitable uses. Jacobson, who stopped accepting new relocatees three months ago, wants to turn the Regina into a "European-style *pensione*," with a restaurant in the empty commercial space on

(continued on page 14)

SUBPLOT

If I Could Litigate Against the Animals

IS THERE ANY PRECEDENT TO that $1 million lawsuit against the Bronx Zoo's rock-throwing primates? "I don't know of any, actually," says the victim's lawyer, Alan Berliner. So we did some digging for him:

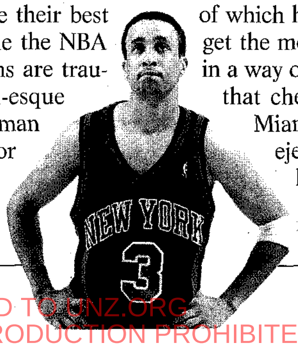
- In 1995, Bronx Zoo employee Robin Silverman's parents lost a $5 million suit after she was mauled to death by two Siberian tigers. Jurors said she should have counted tigers before entering the pen.
- Pittsburgh Zoo volunteer Nancy Lynn Sakach won $50,000 after Chuckles the dolphin nipped off her fingertip in 1990. But the state overturned the award in 1996 when the dolphin was ruled "wild."
- Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo was cleared in the 1993 fatal elephant trampling of handler Char-Lee Torre. The zoo gave Torre's family $100,000 and pink-slipped Tillie, the 9,500-pound pachyderm.
- Houston lawyer Howard Singleton is handling two pending animal cases. In one, a zoo's wolf bit a boy's hand. "How much are a couple of fingers worth to a child?" he says. "If it was Mozart, there wouldn't have been a Mozart."

ROBERT KOLKER

CAMEO

The Garden Loses Its Flower

CHICAGO LOSES MICHAEL JORDAN AND THE Bulls instantly stink; New York loses John Starks and the Knicks have their best title shot since the last time the NBA was Jordan-free. Still, Knicks fans are traumatized. Starks was no Jordan-esque machine—he was a bundle of human frailties, and that made rooting for him an incredibly pure expression of fandom. The Garden crowd was Starks's oxygen, his adrenaline—without us, he was one air ball away from the cockroach basketball league out of which he'd crawled. And who could forget the moment he stood up for New York in a way our mayor could only dream of? In that cheap-shot-marred playoff game in Miami two years ago, the referees ejected Starks, and on his way out, he paused to flip a glorious bird to that hateful, hissing crowd. Like every Knicks fan wanted to.



tration by Gary Baseman. Photograph by Michael Conroy/AP/Wide World.

Hotel *continued from page 13*

Third Avenue.

Jacobson's already begun advertising the Regina on the Web as a $35-a-night tourist hotel, though it's far from ready. The day manager, David Wiener, chuckles as a stylishly dressed couple walks in carrying suitcases. "Oh, look," he says. "Normal people are trying to check in!"

The pair introduce themselves as Dirk and Eva, students from Frankfurt. Dirk glances nervously at the peeling yellow paint, and Eva points to the exposed wiring dangling from a light fixture. "I've got a very nice room for you," calls the superintendent, Tommy, disappearing down the hall. "I just need to get the heat working!" The tourists can see their breath as they ask about other cheap hotels nearby. Suddenly, a commotion erupts at the top of the stairway. "You took my $20!" a woman shouts as bodies crash into walls and doors slam. "Better call the police," says Wiener. "Andy's about to take this guy out with a hammer!" And indeed, Andy—a menacing figure with a shaved head—is holding some kind of tool in his right hand as he pins another, larger man to the wall in the second-floor hallway. Dirk and Eva quickly depart.

Jacobson is naming the restaurant—which he hopes to open by Valentine's Day—the Café De Ville, after Paris's city hall, the Hôtel De Ville. "A place where people can come at all hours and find a debate," he says. For now, he has his hands full trying to carry out renovations while tenants conspire to stop him. A favorite act of sabotage, Jacobson says, is to flood the bathroom above the restaurant kitchen. Ten times since the ceiling was painted, someone has stuffed the toilets and drains with steel wool and left the water running full-blast. Finally, Jacobson got wise: He gestures to what looks like an enormous sink mounted in the kitchen ceiling. "A catch basin," he says proudly, pointing out the black iron drain pipe that runs out of the steel receptacle. "This way, hopefully, no one'll wind up with toilet water in their bouillabaisse." ETHAN SMITH

The anchor blues: Roma Torre and Dominic Carter in their classy new digs.

SITE LINES

Broadcast Views

Beloved New York 1 survives its makeover.

NEW YORK 1, THE TIME Warner–owned cable news station, is to regular TV news as the Greek coffee shop is to Planet Hollywood. It's straightforward, reliable, and steadfastly underproduced, a godsend for people like me, who need news but can't stand the slick, hammy output of the network affiliates. So, even though I'd been warned, I was unnerved to tune in on Martin Luther King day to Kristin Shaughnessy chirping, "Welcome to the new look of New York 1!"

My worst fears, it seemed, had been realized. The familiar, drab set painted in light blues and pinks—landlord colors—was done over in electric blues and browns. Metallic railings and trim made the newsroom glisten. The weather reports featured "airplane perspective" radar. And the anchors had NY1 logos hovering over their shoulders like guardian angel Overnight, the corner coffe shop had been transformed int the bar at an airport Sheraton. contemplated staying in bed.

Instead, I made an appointment to visit the station's Wes 42nd Street studios, to see ho much damage had really bee done. There, I discovered tha NY1 didn't hire a team of corporate consultants to punch up it on-air presence, as would an self-respecting division of Tim Warner. The do-it-yourself new station, where reporters doubl as cameramen, relied on its in-house graphics team and a se designer. The bright, color-saturated environment seen on TV i mostly a simple decorating job paint (a shade called NY1 blue) pale-blue sconces, wood paneling, gleaming strips of metal and logos, logos everywhere.

Seeing it up close, I was relieved—NY1's endearingly awkward style is shinier but otherwise intact. Come to think of it the station's makeover is not s different from what's happene to many Greek coffee shops i recent years. At first, everythin is a bit too cheerful. But if th hash browns don't change, I'l get used to it. KARRIE JACOB

LESSONS

Go Tell It on Mount Fuji

IN THE FLUORESCENT-LIT BASEMENT OF HARLEM'S Memorial Baptist Church, about a dozen full-size Japanese sit in a semicircle of pint-size chairs meant for preschoolers. Jeffrey Bolding, a 40-year-old choral director, plays a few keys on an old upright piano, grimacing at the off-kilter notes. "I need a new piano," he sings, and then he turns to his pupils. "Let's work on 'In That Great Gettin' Up Morning' again." The singers barely get the first line out before Bolding cuts them off with a bellowing laugh. "It's not *morning*, it's *m-a-a-w-n-i-n*," he says in an exaggerated New Orleans drawl. The singers nod solemnly and get ready to try again.

The workshop is the brainchild of Tommy Tomita, a former Tokyo-jazz-club owner who now lives in Harlem and often leads groups of Japanese tourists and expats to check out the neighborhood's landmarks and choirs. Tomita advertises the three-hour sessions ($30 for the first one, $15 after), held on Saturday afternoons, in newspapers and grocery stores that cater to the local Japanese population.

The gospel lyrics are translated into Japanese so the students, most of whom speak little or no English, can understand the meaning. Then they memorize the sounds. "They are very reserved culturally, but this music opens them up," says Bolding, still at the piano. He starts in again on the song, but the singing is timid and halting. "You sound too dreary," Bolding shouts. After a couple more bars, they get into it, clapping and swaying as they belt out the chorus. Bolding smiles approvingly.

"I love the gospel music because it makes me *feel*," explains Yuko Ichioka, a makeup artist who started coming to the workshop five months ago. "I used to sing jazz and R&B in Japan, but I didn't like the words: 'I need you, baby.' They do not mean anything." MAURA EGAN

Choir director Jeffrey Bolding revs up his students.

Photographs: top, Philip Green bottom, Evan K

BUSINESS

The Rainmakers

Meteorologists predict profitable weather.

ON A MILD JANUARY MORNing, Michael Schlacter and Jeffrey Schultz, partners in the consulting firm Weather 2000, are trading highlights from their youth. Nostalgia does not come in the form of Yankee games, however. "The storm of April '82 wowed me to death," says Schultz, shaking his head. "A foot and a half, and in five days it all melted!" "What about Hugo in '89?" counters Schlacter. "Belle in '76, Gloria in '85," Schultz offers back. "Bob," says Schlacter, as if it's his final offer, "August 19, 1991." Schultz nods respectfully.

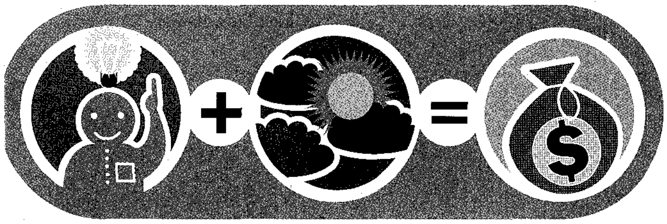
Schlacter, 28, and Schultz, 27, studied meteorology together at Cornell, and when they graduated, they decided to forgo the obvious routes—TV careers or jobs with the National Weather Service—and delve into the nascent market of forecasting for businesses. At the time, new technologies were making it possible to predict weather patterns further in advance. "We saw a renaissance in the meteorology community," says Schlacter.

Since the firm was launched two years ago, clients have steadily come calling. Analyzing the weather for litigation—determining whether a road was icy at the time of an accident, for instance—represents a good chunk of its business. Clients like energy conglomerates want to know what next summer will be like so they can prepare for a heat wave or stock up on insurance to cover losses if no one reaches for the AC; restaurant managers check in to see if strawberries will have a bad year and be too expensive to offer on menus. "People don't realize how many things weather affects," says Schlacter.

Just as for their on-air colleagues, the awful specter of being wrong hangs over everything they do. "Sometimes I'm like, 'Where's that cold front?' " confesses Schultz. "I watch the Weather Channel and get stomachaches." The two also spend a good deal of time educating clients on what *can't* be predicted. "People say, 'Hey, I'm getting married in July—hook me up with a forecast,' " says Schlacter. "But I can't say it will be 80 with a passing shower at 3:30. Our philosophy is forecasting probability." And according to those probabilities, expect a nor'easter to hit the city on Super Bowl weekend. Weather 2000 also predicts a normal-to-slightly-warmer-than-normal summer in the Hamptons, so that beach house looks good. But rent, don't buy—the '99 hurricane season will be nasty.

Though they lack the celebrity of, say, Mr. G., the Weather 2000 partners still get a bit of glamour on the job. "*The Chris Rock Show* called once about an outdoor segment," says Schlacter. The producers of *The Ice Storm* phoned, too, wondering about snow in Connecticut. And since they're the only listing for WEATHER FORECASTING SERVICE in the phone book, their telephone rings constantly. "One kid from Staten Island called up about his school project," says Schultz. "He wanted to know how the weather would be affected if the earth was shaped like a cube."

SARAH BERNARD



ıstration by Anton Ioukhnovets.

THE SCENE

Dolled Up

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

Freddie Prinze Jr. and Lil' Kim celebrating *Teen People's* first anniversary at Life.

Kim Porter and Kara Young celebrating the launch of Baby Phat Jewelry at Wooster Street's 76.

Rappers Pepa and Treach celebrating the release of Foxy Brown's new album, *Chyna Doll,* at Lot 61.

Model Heidi Klum at the screening of Miramax's *Playing by Heart,* held at the Paris Theater.

Nancy Novogrod and Mario Buatta at *Travel & Leisure's* first annual Critics' Choice Awards.

Walter Cronkite and Connie Chung celebrating the publication of Lesley Stahl's *Reporting Live* at Elaine's.

Lynn Wyatt and Bobby Short at the opening of the forty-fifth annual Winter Antiques Show, held at the Seventh Regiment Armory.

GOTHAMSTYLE

Hat Heads

Our defense against the elements . . .

Khiliah: Bought at Old Navy

Ola: Bought in Bolivia

Sergei: Bought at Barneys

Yvette: Bought at Caldor

Pigeon: Bought at the So What boutique on Prince Street

Marcy: Bought at a Lower East Side vendor

Amanda: Received as a gift

Lo: Made by Grandma

Kiyoto: Bought in Tokyo

Edwin: Bought from a vendor outside Madison Square Garden

Hillary Jacobs: Made it herself

Muhammed Abdul: Bought from a stand on 34th Street

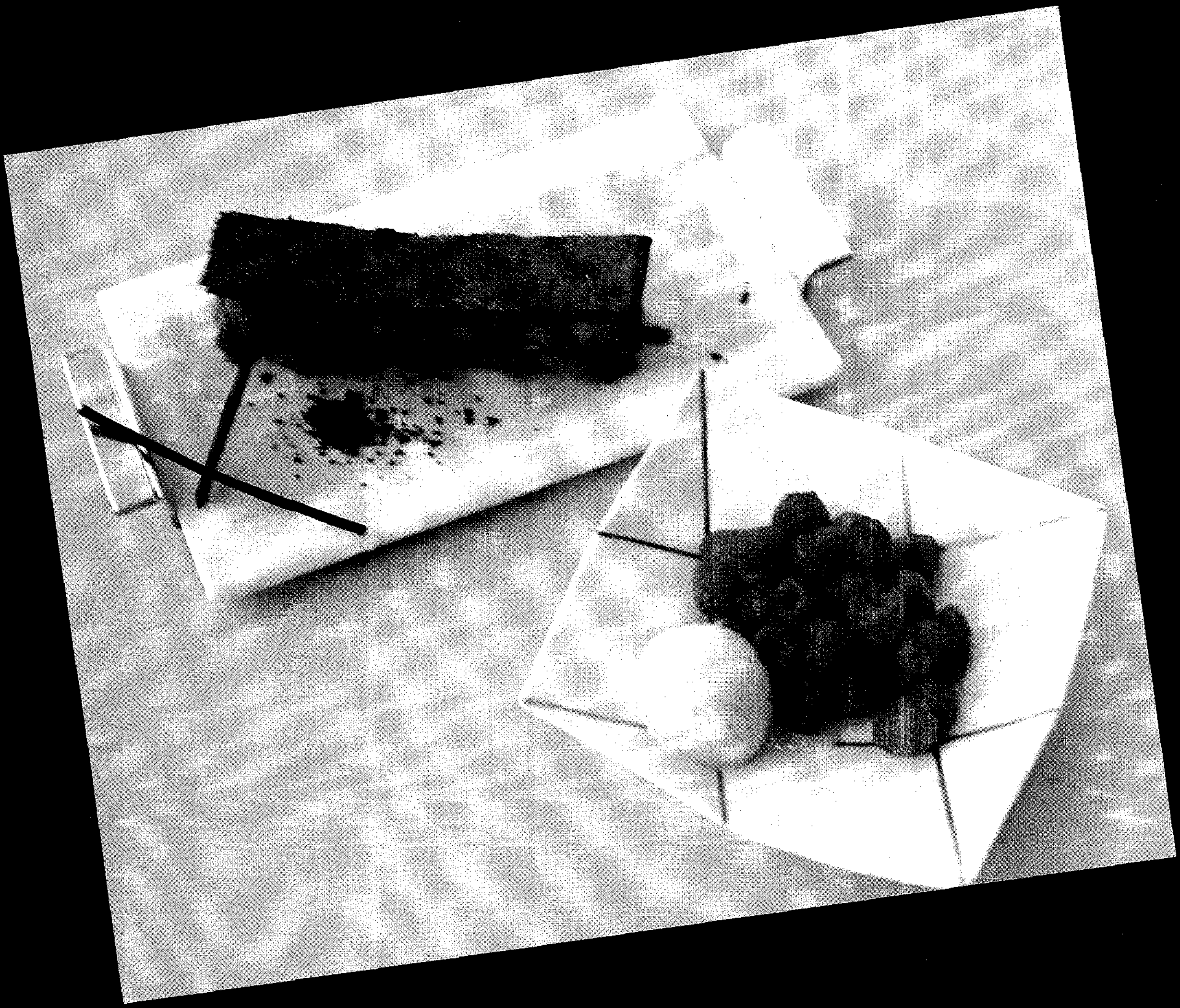
Gillian: Bought in London

Bud: Bought in Sydney, Australia

EDITED BY VANESSA GRIGORIADIS

Photographed by Kristine Larsen

GIVING HOME COOKING A WHOLE NEW MEANING.



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THE NATIONAL INTEREST MICHAEL TOMASKY

End Run

The Republicans, like the New York Jets, kept hoping for a last-minute miracle even as Bronco Bill Clinton faced the cameras and did that voodoo that he does so well.

SPEND A COUPLE OF DAYS IN Bill Clinton's Washington, and you can start to understand why they hate him so. Tuesday night, with his usual what-me-worry cool, he delivers an address that reduces the town to jelly. Meanwhile, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon, the Senate, supposedly making history and engaged in proceedings of the direst gravity, is very literally putting itself and its audience to sleep. Lately, it's as if Clinton couldn't lose a round to these people if he tried—and, of course, he *has* tried.

Surreal was the word of the week in Washington, but in fact one sensed little surreality in the House chamber last Tuesday night. Last *year,* sure; that State of the Union address hit the week after the scandal broke, and the moment provided the highest political drama in this country since Watergate. But this year, no one expected Clinton to mention impeachment, and he didn't; no one expected Republicans to misbehave, and—the handful of no-shows notwithstanding—they didn't; everyone expected Clinton to deliver a stocking-stuffing olio of a speech that drew from both left and right, and he did.

It was not, by a long shot, speech-making for the ages. Clinton has never exactly waxed Churchillian. There was nary a surprising adjective or verb, no historical reference beyond the most cursory and mundane; a State of the Union address, Clinton-style, is strictly about policy, about talking "past the representatives and to their constituents," as a Statuary Hall denizen put it to me, and on this score—this for farmers, that for immigrants, the other thing for uniformed grunts—the speech was indeed a huge success.

The only visible tension in the room gathered in Tom DeLay's shoulders. The House majority whip refused to applaud one sentence of the president's speech, even the sentences having to do with raising military pay and awakening Cuba from the long sleep of Fidelismo. He just glared, balefully, malevolently, at Clinton the whole time, body taut as a prizefighter's at a weigh-in, working his chewing gum furiously between his gnashing bicuspids. But DeLay was the exception. Republicans along the center aisle leaned forward to shake the president's hand as he entered and exited the chamber, just as they always do; even Strom Thurmond seemed intent on pressing the First Flesh at speech's end, though Clinton, intently working the Democratic side, slid past him.

Meanwhile, in the Senate chamber during the afternoon hours, they can't even fill the galleries. Wednesday, for example, there were, the constant and glamorous presence of Whoopi Goldberg aside, 20 to 50 empty seats at any given moment. Senators rubbed their eyes; reporters, I confess myself included, dozed briefly. The nation's periodical press is allotted thirteen seats. At one o'clock Wednesday, as Clinton lawyer Gregory Craig commenced his presentation, two of those thirteen were empty, meaning that all the weekly and monthly magazines in America combined could muster only eleven witnesses to history in the making.

IT'S GOT TO BE MADDENING FOR CONservatives, for the media, even for others who are not in those two camps but who nevertheless want the process to work. Did I say *process*? Let me digress. Washington is devoted above all else to process. Consider, if you will, the Capitol Hill "community," to use that poor, overworked word. A town of about 30,000 people, give or take. A town where, to walk around freely without arousing suspicion (obvious tourists not included), you must dangle a laminated I.D. card from your neck at all times, and where you'd do well to keep your keys and coins in a handy pocket so you can fish them out quickly at the many metal detectors. A town where there's a cop every 80 feet or so, nodding at you solicitously but ready to pounce like a puma if you strike out down the wrong passageway. A town where the kings of the Hill still constitute a white, male gerontocracy, and where virtually every subordinate, from the cafeteria help to the people who drive those little subways that scurry between the Senate office buildings and the Capitol, is black (and where they "Yes, sir" you to the point of embarrassment). A town where public facilities, elevators and the like, are still, as it were, segregated (SENATORS ONLY, MEMBERS ONLY).

A town such as this sets great store by

Illustration by Francisco Cacere

its values and rules. Whatever else these nutty Republicans think they're accomplishing, they chiefly think on some level they're upholding both. This is no doubt what Henry Hyde thought he was doing, and indeed there is a kind of logic under his madness—the president clearly lied, probably broke some law or other, stonewalled and mocked Hyde's beloved House, and must pay the price. An utterly rational Capitol Hill political perspective.

The problem is that neither Clinton nor the much-celebrated two thirds of the American people set much store by those values and rules. Clinton didn't in 1992, when he end-ran around the Washington press and went straight to Larry King and MTV. He didn't, stupidly, in his first term, when he tried to change the policy on gays in the military without even calling Sam Nunn, who at the time chaired the Senate Armed Services Committee. And he certainly hasn't for the past year.

And the people? The political response of Hyde and DeLay, and Sam and Cokie for that matter, was the only response they knew. But they failed to understand that people never responded to this scandal using political instincts. They responded emotionally, or psychologically, or however else they responded, but not politically. That's why the political expectation—that the public would desert this liar and philanderer—was wrong. Opinion hasn't changed, and, barring some inconceivable bombshell on the order of a revelation that Monica was simultaneously doing Tariq Aziz, it won't.

The vote that's due this week to drop the case will probably fail, and in all likelihood we will see a few witnesses. Still, it bears watching whether two or three other conservative panjandrums follow Pat Robertson, whose "Surrender, GOP" announcement came as this was written, down the path of forgiveness. Robertson recognizes the obvious, that the post-speech Clinton is out in front, as they say, on everything from Social Security to education to military preparedness, and that the GOP has only impeachment and, thanks to Jennifer Dunn, who delivered one of the vapid Republican responses to the Clinton speech, gardening.

Democrats shouldn't crow, either —impeachment has galvanized them, but they'll go back to their usual bickering once it ends, and the screw will turn many times between now and November 2000. But for now, the GOP is making a mess of itself, and if you want to go watch, there are still plenty of seats available. ▬

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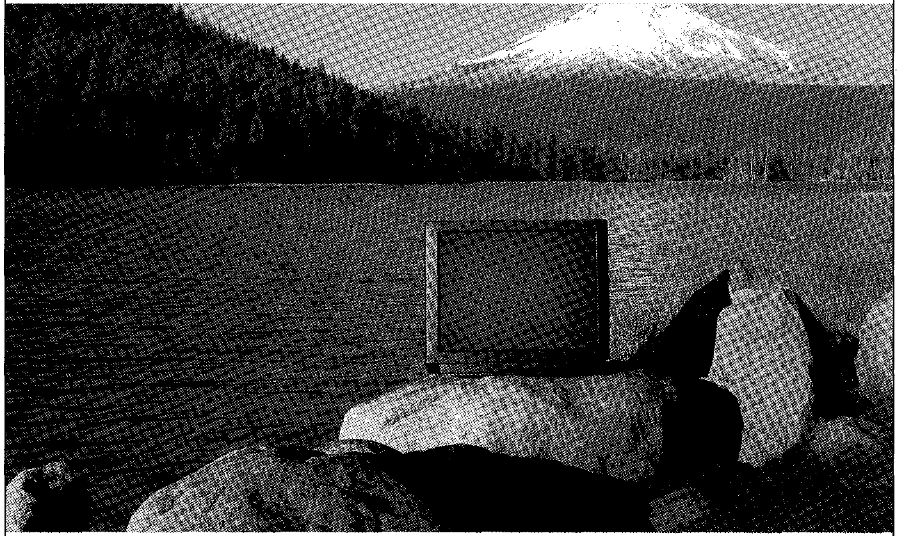

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MEDIA MICHAEL WOLFF

Lady Liberties

For "panting puppy" Bill Clinton, "helpless victim" Ken Starr, and even our entire "soft-porn nation," Maureen Dowd has one message: She's angry with us! Really, really *angry!*

SEX, OR THE OPPOSITE OF SEX, has made Maureen Dowd the New York *Times* op-ed-page poster girl.

She has flown past the pretense of perjury and indicted the president not just for his indiscretions but, really, for the nature of his sexuality—self-indulgent and weak. He is a "panting puppy"; "he has made wickedness seem pathetic"; if he honestly described his encounters, "he would be laughed out of any locker room in the country"; he is, she says of his sexual classiness, no Jack Kennedy. She pauses along the way to heap scorn upon Kenneth Starr's sexuality, too. "He had become," she wrote, "the helpless victim of his cravings for ecstasy . . . gaining pleasure from repetition: " 'breasts,' 'genitalia,' 'inserted,' 'stain.' "

Dowd has risen above most of the other caustic voices in the impeachment cacophony because where others clearly have a political agenda, Dowd's views in her twice-weekly 700-word column seem born of a purer rage. She truly seems to have it in for unfaithful men, Hollywood, the media, and all other cornerstones of "trivial and craven and tawdry" morality—the "soft-porn nation," as she recently put it.

Still, it did not necessarily seem like hypocrisy when she began to be linked with the actor Michael Douglas—a kind of Bill Clinton's Bill Clinton who, the tabloids report, has undergone sexaholic therapy. Rather, it seemed like part of the logical background of her wrath. Perhaps she is drawn to such men (at the same time, Douglas appears to be involved with ABC newscaster Elizabeth Vargas). That would certainly explain her anger—it's at her own women-who-love-too-much weakness. Maybe.

One of the hallmarks of her column, however, is its impersonal nature. She never lets us see the private Maureen Dowd or the domestic Dowd or the doubting Dowd. Although the column is relentlessly first-person, we aren't offered even the vaguest outlines of her daily life or the roots of her feelings. Unlike Clinton, who communicates with sentiment and vulnerability, Dowd is all armor and aggression.

Dowd, of course, took the "woman's spot" on the op-ed page, replacing the hugely popular Anna Quindlen, whose stock-in-trade was emotional and domestic nuance. But where Quindlen reached for a majestic acceptance and understanding of the pain and ambiguities of public as well as private life, Dowd is fixated on the essential depravity of mankind. Quindlen was a caregiver; Dowd is an open wound.

In addition to her un-*Times*-like venom, the other un-*Times*-like feature of her column is that there is almost no reporting—often, no new information at all. She doesn't look for stories, doesn't much confer with insiders, doesn't hit the streets. It's just 'tude. She is derisive, mocking, hyperbolic, bitchy. She is more in the style of a cable-network talking head than she is in the grand *Times* tradition of James Reston (whose antecedent is Walter Lippman); indeed, she more rightly belongs in the company of Westbrook Pegler and the other vitriolic Hearst columnists than in the world of *Times* worthies.

Even as a stylist, on which basis Dowd developed her reputation at the *Times,* she has tended to put aside her eye for the killer detail and become more of a speechifier, even a proselytizer, her chief devices being staccato repetitions, dripping sarcasm, and symbolic straw men. ("It makes perfect sense that Geraldo could be the *NBC Nightly News* anchor for the millennium. It makes perfect sense that *60 Minutes* could hire Murphy Brown as a correspondent. It makes perfect sense that Bill Clinton could go on the board of DreamWorks.") Her style is really radio.

But it works. She is the *Times'* new voice. She is the *Times'* avenging heroine. They really, really love her.

COLUMNS ON THE *TIMES* OP-ed page have historically had a divided purpose: On the one hand, the mission is to have eminent journalists bring thoughtfulness and reason to the issues of the day; on the other, it's to reward successful service to the corporation (ergo, the page is something of a graveyard).

The new generation of columnists—along with Dowd, there is Thomas Friedman representing the international perspective, Frank Rich the cultural side, Bob Herbert the underclass point of view—is supposed to maintain that tradition of augustness and reward, while duking it out in the significantly more competitive world of today's punditry.

Although Dowd may not be succeeding in the august department, there is a 'You go, girl' squad cheering the way she has brought the *Times* some street cred with her buzz-producing pugnaciousness. Part of her appeal within the *Times* is precisely that she is not in the classic, sober, analytic, elitist, Ivy League (Wasp or Jewish) tradition. She is in that *other* newspaper tradition: urban, Irish, working-class. The *Times,* while distinguished by the former, has always been as much the latter (Har-

Photographs: Christy Bowe/IPOL (Maureen Dowd); Photodisc, Inc (backgrounds).

vard snot versus street reporter).

Arriving at the metro desk after the Washington *Star* folded (and after a brief stint at *Time*), Dowd almost immediately stood out in what is probably the most difficult, politically fraught, and competitive part of the paper (the highest ratio of reporters to bylines).

The *Times* often makes an internal distinction between reporters whose gift is reporting—that is, bird-dogging the news—and reporters who can turn a nice phrase and clever analogy (which are then repeated in *Times Talk*, the in-house newsletter). As the writer-reporter with the nicest phrases and cleverest analogies, Dowd excelled in the eighties era of a softer, more feature-heavy front page.

In 1986, she was rewarded with an assignment upgrade to the Washington bureau. In Washington, she starred both as a writer—becoming one of the signature journalists of the Reagan and Bush years (she is often credited with helping foster the Bush goofy-preppy-endearing persona; Dowd and Bush are said to keep up a chummy correspondence)—and as a *Times* insider. Howell Raines, then the Washington-bureau chief, now the head of the editorial page and in contention to be the paper's top editor, became her mentor and closest confidant, and, by most reports, she his. "She cracks Howell up and Howell cracks her up," says a senior *Times*man. Many people at the *Times* believe that at least for a period they were romantically involved—but part of the Dowd mystique is that no one seems to know for sure. Just as important, she became friendly with the publisher's son, Arthur Sulzberger Jr., then in the midst of his short climb to the top.

In *Times* legend, she crossed the Rubicon when she broke a front-page story on Kitty Kelley's Nancy Reagan biography, revealing that Nancy Reagan consulted astrologers. In Kremlinesque *Times* by-play, the fact that the story had been passed to the less-experienced weekend editors instead of being evaluated by the more stringent weekday editors got her into trouble. Unreported, unsubstantiated allegations about the First Lady of the United States on the front page of the *Times* . . . went the tenor of the public rebuke. In a memorable facedown over the issue, Dowd threatened to quit. "At that point, institutionally, at the highest levels, the decision was made that she was one of the paper's major assets," says a *Times* insider. After that, the job of the organization became to protect her and to keep her happy. Oft noted among the less valued staff, with envy and wonder, is that she has gotten away with more of an editorial voice in news reports than perhaps any other *Times* reporter before her.

In 1995, upon the departure of Anna Quindlen from the op-ed page, Dowd's "Liberties" column debuted.

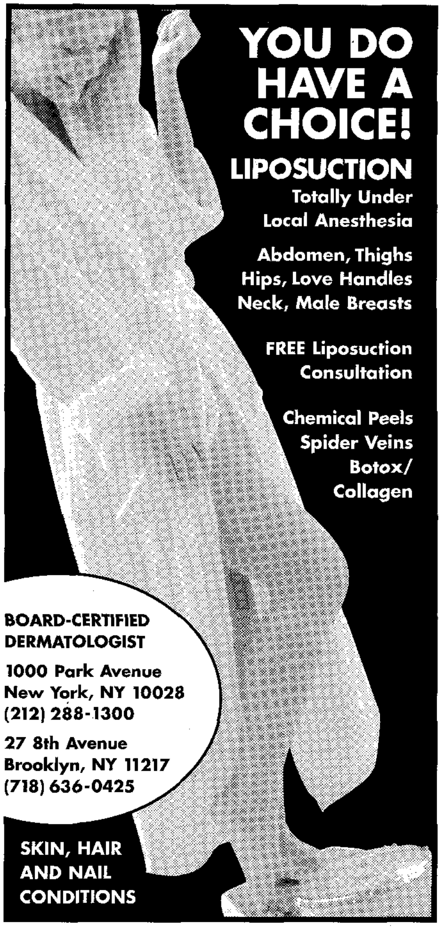
THE FIERCE DOWD CULT AT THE PAPER—she is held in awe by management *and* rank and file—seems to be inspired not so much by the column itself as by her status as a real reporter (Frank Rich, for instance, who came from Harvard and started as the protégé of culture czar Arthur Gelb, is not particularly popular among the rank and file) and her virtuoso success within the *Times* organization. Also, the boys like her: She's the good-looking girl who belonged to the literary magazine in high school, sardonically commenting upon the cool guys. She is smart, surprisingly shy, funny, available, but not very available. She's Daria.

> *There is a kind of* **postmodern self-referentialism** *to Maureen Dowd. She exists in a closed circle, protecting herself from* **a cruel world, a phony world.**

There is a kind of postmodern self-referentialism to her. She exists in a closed circle, protecting herself from a cruel world, a phony world. She gets material for her columns by reading the New York *Times*, watching television, and reading other people's columns. She almost never appears on television and would not be interviewed for this article ("Ms. Dowd," said her assistant, without irony, "does not speak to the press"). Her sources are other journalists; her kitchen cabinet includes the *New Republic*'s Leon Wieseltier (quoted so often he can seem like a co-writer of the column); Rosalyn Carter's former press spokesman Paul Costello; *Times* reporter Alessandra Stanley, and Howell Raines. Oh, and her mother. "She checks everything with her mother," says a Washington-bureau veteran. "But beyond her circle of friends and her mother, she doesn't really speak to anyone else."

Except, recently, Douglas. The issue of the 47-year-old

(continued on page 85)



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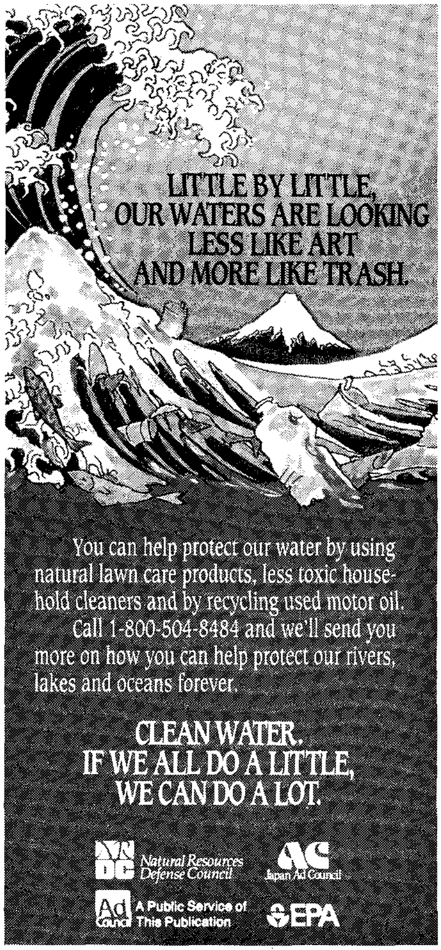

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Manhattan:

Egged on by low crime rates and escalating property values, the city's new activists have declared war on high-rises, French restaurants, toy stores, and other social undesirables of the new millennium.

KEITH GALLOWAY, A PROJECT MANAGER at an interior-design firm who bears a passing resemblance to Jack Lemmon's Felix Unger, lives in a doorman building in Chelsea. His narrow stretch of West 20th, between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, is lined with elegant brownstones; cars are parked at an angle in front of the block's 10th Precinct station. It's a safe place to live, and the cops who check in between shifts are the only real congestion in the neighborhood. ● Keith Galloway wants to make sure it stays that way. ● Over at No. 217, Webster Hall club owner Doug Ballinger and his wife, Alexandra, are gearing up to open the Fresh Organic Coffee Lounge. But the lounge's name is a smoke screen, says Galloway. In November 1997, Ballinger announced that he would be applying for a liquor license and suggested that six days a week, the lounge would stay open until four in the morning. And that has the block percolating with anger. ● At age 43, Keith Galloway has found himself cast in the unlikely role of community activist. He's not the in-your-face, snarling kind of anarchist who threw bottles and rocks in Tompkins Square Park in the eighties. Galloway is one of a species now proliferating in New York—men and women with high-paying day jobs who hold meetings in their lofts or brownstones after work to resist all kinds of development in their neighborhood. Perhaps you've seen their flyers, printed in bulk at the local Kinko's and slipped under your door. They want your support. Or donations to pay the lawyer they've engaged to fight the good fight. ● Improbable as it seems, the battle over whether martinis will ever be shaken at the Fresh Organic Coffee Lounge speaks volumes about the state of politics in fin de siècle New York City. New Yorkers have always been adept at the art of kvetching. But these days, the complaints about who moves in next door are getting increasingly high-pitched as local groups demand a say in how the Apple is carved. Says one veteran anti-bar campaigner, "Sometimes I feel like Ibsen's Enemy of the People. This is a political story, too." ● As New York—and

BY SASHA ABRAMSKY

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHEN WEBSTER

KEEP
OUT

Manhattan in particular—rebounds from decades of decay and middle-class flight, residents are demanding living standards comparable to those in the suburbs: safe and clean streets, quiet nights, few outsiders passing through. Murder rates and violent crime are down in all five boroughs. Real-estate values are soaring, nearly 50 percent higher than they were a decade ago.

Expectations have risen just as quickly. Once, it took violence-prone outpatients at drug treatment centers and vagrants hanging around outside homeless shelters to raise our hackles. But nowadays, people are willing to protest just about anything—street fairs and parades, garish billboards, trucks unpacking produce outside grocery stores, limos discharging diners at restaurants. A revitalized New York has bred a sense of entitlement; suddenly, nobody wants to trip over any of this stuff on his or her doorstep.

Developers and businessmen are having to answer to a new corps of self-appointed turf police, and they're not happy about it, to say the least. "The idea that *'you're* moving into *my* neighborhood,' " exclaims hotelier and restaurateur Brian McNally. "Excuse me! We're New Yorkers as well. Trying to divide New York up into a succession of autonomous little villages is ridiculous."

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WORK PERMIT

Developers and businessmen are having to answer to a new

All politics is local—but New York's new politics is more local than ever. The tactics honed in service of liberal activism are being applied to distinctly small-town goals. Today's picketer is tomorrow's politician, as people are using these causes to network their way into public office. And these days, the quality-of-life issues they're riding in on go way beyond squeegee men and muggers. Now the targets are movie shoots and Toys 'R' Us stores and outdoor cafés and fancy French restaurants as well as nightclubs open till all hours, all of which, arguably, are things that help make New York New York. *Not in my backyard!* (acronym: NIMBY) has become a mantra of civic pride. But just where, in New York, does one person's backyard end and another's begin?

MANY A NIMBY DISPUTE BEGINS ITS trajectory at a community-board meeting. Community boards were instituted in the fifties, primarily as a forum where objections to the projects of Robert Moses could be aired (even if they were pretty much ignored by the decision-makers of the day). There were isolated victories: One lower-Manhattan board succeeded in thwarting an expressway that would have swallowed much of SoHo. But in the past twenty years, after a couple of key restructurings in the city's government, the boards found themselves with more power over zoning and policy-making than anyone had ever anticipated.

Community-board meetings have a reputation for attracting garrulous eccentrics, but the boards have amassed real political clout, and each has its own characteristic obsessions. Some, like Two (in the West Village) and Four (representing Chelsea and West Clinton), are known for opposing new high-rises, hotels, and bars; others pretty much limit themselves to single issues: Until the latest Trump-tower controversy erupted, the traffic near the Queensboro Bridge took up much of Community Board Six's energies, for example.

The boards' activities are augmented by a growing army of community associations and freelance activists, defending their territory with an array of tactics; urban planners who work for the city have taken to calling these people BANANAS, another acronym that stands for Build Anything Not Anywhere Near Anything. In TriBeCa, residents led by Carole DeSaram of the TriBeCa Community Association have taken to hanging sheets out of windows to disrupt film shoots on their streets. "Next time," DeSaram says defiantly, "we're going to start using strobe lights out the windows and music." In Chelsea, the nonprofit Downtown Boathouse group got torpedoed this summer after it sought to store kayaks in a shed on Pier 64. Community activists feared that cars would be drawn to the area, and the plan was shelved. And in an industrial neighborhood in the West Village, FedEx has slammed into a wall of opposition in its attempt to expand a large, monolithic distribution center on Leroy Street. Ellen Peterson-Lewis is a local retiree who lives in a charming third-floor loft near the center and mainly objects to the look of the place: "The Village *is* a village. People don't just withdraw into their homes and lock the door."

Donald Trump's plan for a 72-story residential skyscraper near the United Nations has already attracted an impressive roster of celebrity detractors, like billionaire industrialist David Koch and Walter Cronkite. Madonna has joined local residents who are fighting plans to convert the old YMCA building on 63rd Street into a 41-story luxury development. In an affidavit, Madonna expressed fears that

Photographs by Michael McLaughlin.

the project could very well "create a hazard for me and my child" while under construction. The plan is currently in limbo, the developers having postponed the closing until at least April.

Even four-star French restaurateur Daniel Boulud found himself on the receiving end of local wrath in the fall, when Community Board Eight debated his request for a liquor license at his new Restaurant Daniel on East 65th Street. Conjuring up a nightmare vision of double-parked limos and reckless drinking in the vicinity of Central Presbyterian Church, several of Boulud's new neighbors spoke forcefully in favor of the somewhat oxymoronic concept of a wine-free French restaurant. Says Boulud, "Before Daniel, there was a hotel here *and* a restaurant—Le Cirque. The 5 percent of people who come in limousines come in the evening, when traffic is lighter." Boulud plans to appease neighbors by planting flowers and trees on the street. "I should receive a medal from the city," Boulud kids.

WHILE COMMUNITY BOARDS MAY SOUND like democracy in action, they're not quite that. They're actually patronage institutions, with the approximately 50 people on each of the 59 boards across the city appointed by City Council members and borough presidents. And while some 150,000 people live in an average Manhattan board district, perhaps 100 residents show up at the average monthly meeting—200 to 300 if a community is *really* angry.

On paper, community boards still serve only an advisory role to city and state agencies, who frequently choose to ignore their recommendations. The five members of the State Liquor Authority (SLA)—all appointed by Governor Pataki—customarily disregard community-board advice, even though they are forbidden to issue licenses until the boards have their say.

But the boards' sophistication has been growing exponentially in recent years. They have learned to play city and state agencies off against one another, and have started recruiting agencies to act as fellow plaintiffs when they take businesses to court for violating obscure statutes. The threat of negative press is potent to these agencies, who don't want to be accused of not enforcing the law.

There are now several thousand pages of laws and codes and addenda governing who can build what and where in New York—the first city in America to be formally zoned, in 1916. Some of the rules are extremely specific: The western side of West Broadway, for example, can have large buildings, whereas the eastern side, on the edge of the historic district of SoHo, has to meet landmark-commission requirements limiting buildings to six stories.

Not surprisingly, the agencies responsible for meting out permits and licenses are themselves not familiar with every law. And that has opened the door to an increasing number of challenges by activist groups and community boards, who have made these laws their business. When a space is vacated, the battle that ensues over its future use often turns on familiarity with the tangled web of regulations.

Mayor Giuliani, fluent in quality-of-life rhetoric but also eager to appear business-friendly, has often expressed his frustration with the boards; he tried to cut their funding when he was first elected mayor. Superstores are one example of something the mayor wants and SoHo residents don't. "A proposal in 1994 would have allowed megastores in SoHo to take up as much as 20,000 square feet at ground-floor level," says City Councilwoman Kathryn Freed, who got supporters to write the mayor and mustered crowds to protest at hearings and council meetings. "You can imagine the horror." The proposal was eventually scrapped.

of self-appointed turf police, and they're not happy about it.

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Ironically, in reorienting city politics around quality of life, Giuliani and his appointees have found it increasingly impolitic to ignore these boards. State authorities like the SLA may dismiss community concerns, but more and more, the courts are then requiring that these situations be redressed.

And who represents this aggrieved citizenry in these clashes? More often than not, they call attorney Jack Lester.

"I GREW UP IN A RENTAL HOUSE IN LAUrelton, Queens," says Lester, sitting in jeans and a gray T-shirt in his paper-crammed office overlooking Third Avenue. "When I was 10, my parents went on rent strike because there was no hot water or heat in the middle of the winter. I became a lawyer to represent people like my parents." Lester's mother, a bookkeeper, was a supporter of Henry Wallace's Progressive Party; she'd discuss politics at the dinner table with his dad, a jewelry-supplies salesman. Lester's grandfather was a textiles-union organizer on the Lower East Side. "He'd come home, and his head would be bloodied," the attorney says proudly.

Lester, 45, became politicized in the

sixties, attending New York Law School as a classmate of Kathryn Freed in the late seventies. "We've been on the same side of the barricades ever since," he says in his gravelly voice.

He began his career in the office of the Queens district attorney, serving three years in the anti-bias unit. But Lester's real interest lay in landlord-tenant law. In 1989, he was hired as an associate at the law firm Fischbein Badillo. Richard Fischbein had made a name for himself successfully representing Central Park South tenants who were resisting Donald Trump's efforts to evict them. Trump wanted them out so he could refurbish their aging building as a high-priced co-op. Fischbein had a reputation for taking on the big guys. But he found himself spending more and more of his time representing the corporations that paid better, and Lester grew disillusioned. ("Community groups are very time-consuming," Fischbein says. "If you have three different factions, you spend your time wearing a striped shirt and playing referee.")

The firm assigned Lester a number of cases; in all of them, he was representing the landlord. One client was the owner of a loft building on lower Broadway. "He sent me over there to inspect it," Lester recalls, "and I felt more sympathetic to the tenants than I did toward my client. At that point, I realized I had to leave."

Lester quit and hung out his own shingle. Although five or six other lawyers work a considerable number of community cases in the city, Lester is tops in the field, with up to 50 cases going on at once. He likes to trumpet himself as the protector of the bourgeoisie: "Middle-class neighborhoods should not be destabilized by the city's attempts to bring in tax dollars," he says. In his time, Lester has represented local groups fighting bars, superstores, movie complexes, street fairs, heliports, and the red neon Travelers umbrella logo that hangs high above the streets of TriBeCa. Thanks in large part to Lester's efforts, there is no 42nd Street trolley and no multiplex cinema near the Holland Tunnel exit. And Riverside South, Donald Trump's high-rise project now taking shape on the West Side, could still be foiled. "Trump promised a park to the community in exchange for zoning changes and special permits," Lester says. "Now he's building it in such a way that the community won't have the park he promised," he adds indignantly.

"That's an absolute lie," says Trump's lawyer Jeffrey Braun. Trump wants to give them their waterfront park, explains Braun, but the Department of Transportation wouldn't move the piece of highway required. They'll get their park, but much of it will be *below* the overpass.

Lester is a brash man, respected by many but loathed by an equal number, including some former clients. "He's tried several times to run for office," says one community activist. "Does he do it because he believes in these causes? No. He loves to get his name in the papers."

With a slightly bittersweet laugh, Lester responds that if he'd wanted that, he would have stayed with the D.A., trying rape and murder cases. He does admit he'd be interested if a State Assembly seat opened in his district—in 1990, he ran unsuccessfully for State Senate. "But the bottom line," he says earnestly, "is that being involved in these cases gives me an influence on public policy."

Are there cases where residents are being too thin-skinned? "I was once asked by a community group to bring a lawsuit against outdoor cafés," Lester remembers. He turned it down. "I *like* outdoor cafés. They give the city a European feel. That's where I part compa-

"M&R Bar's garden is a sound trap in the summer," says Sa

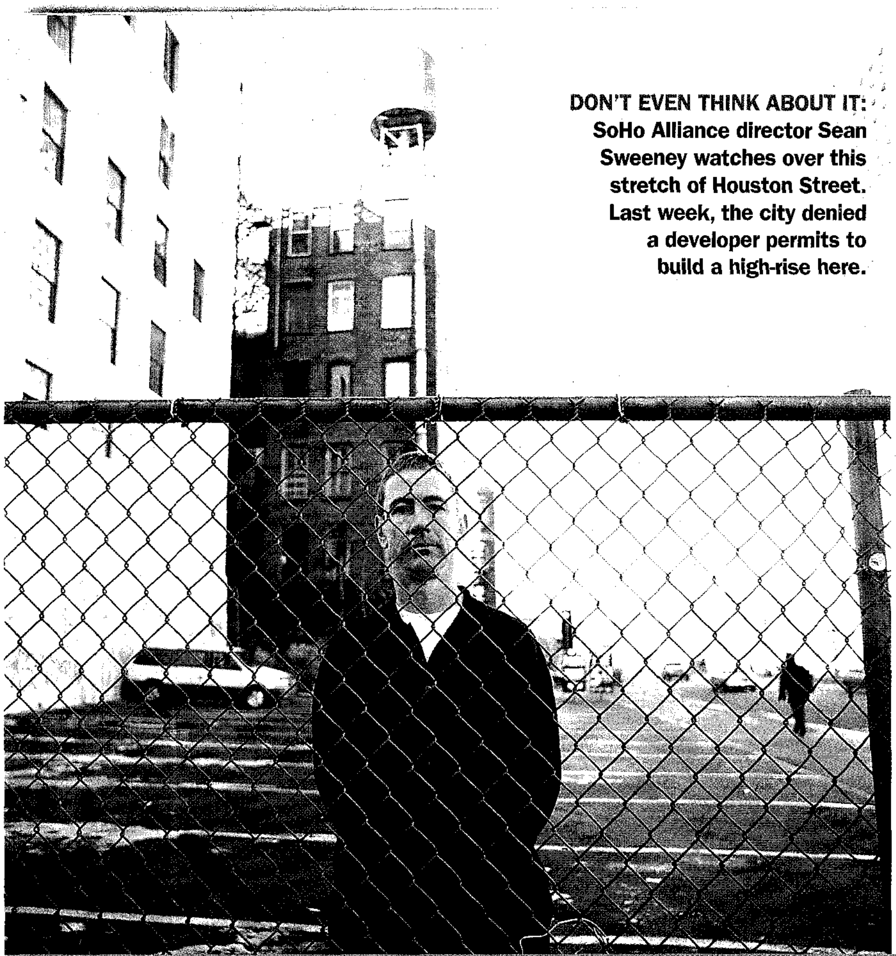
UTOPIA IS ONLY A FEW PHONE CALLS AWAY

A step-by-step guide to keeping developers from trespassing on your turf.

- Contact members of the City Council and State Assembly, and enlist the support of their offices.
- Attend all community-board meetings, and take supporters with you. These take place once a month, usually at schools or community centers, and anybody can speak. Monthly specialized hearings are dedicated to transportation, business, land use, and quality of life, among other topics. Often, it is at these meetings that locals first hear about proposed developments in their neighborhood.
- Planning Department hearings are also important; the schedule is published in the *City Record*—distributed free to community boards and libraries—and appears on the department Website: www.ci.nyc.ny.us/planning.)
- Sit in on State Liquor Authority hearings, where businesses often go to ask for a later closing time or the expansion of a wine license into a full liquor license.

When these requests are made, the SLA, at 11 Park Place, is supposed to notify the community boards before the hearing; unfortunately, the SLA does not always do this promptly. Anyone can attend the hearings, but you can also file an objection through your community board.

- Research zoning laws: The three-volume code, titled *The Zoning Resolution of the City of New York,* can be found at the Municipal Reference and Research Center at 31 Chambers Street. For answers to specific zoning questions, the general information line at the Department of City Planning (720-3300) is also helpful.
- Check with the Department of Buildings at 60 Hudson Street to see whether the correct building permits have been filed. If a permit appears to be missing, file a complaint on the department's hotline: 312-8530. Although Buildings is notoriously lax about enforcing these laws, once the infraction is reported, the staff must intervene.
- The Board of Standards and Appeals has the variance requests filed by businesses hoping to gain exceptions to the local zoning requirements. Review those files at the 40 Rector Street offices.
- If a bar or sidewalk café has a license but is impossibly noisy, call the Department of Environmental Protection's Noise and Air Complaints hot line (718-337-4357). If enough people call, noise-pollution inspectors from the DEP will be dispatched to check decibel levels.
- Find out from the Department of Buildings whether the bar or club you oppose has a public-assembly permit. If not, file a complaint with Buildings. If you believe dancing is going on in a venue not licensed for a cabaret, notify Buildings or the police.
- Contact the Department of Consumer Affairs (487-4444) to register complaints about sidewalk cafés operating without a permit or with too many tables on the sidewalk.
- A complete list of government agencies and their phone numbers can be found in *The Green Book,* available in city libraries or at the City Bookstore (1 Centre Street; 669-8246).



DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT: SoHo Alliance director Sean Sweeney watches over this stretch of Houston Street. Last week, the city denied a developer permits to build a high-rise here.

ardillo. "I'm a lot more sensitive since I had this in my backyard."

ny with my brother and sister activists."

Two years ago, in December 1996, NIMBYism scored a major victory in Lester's own Upper East Side neighborhood. Toys 'R' Us tried to open a large corner store at 80th Street and Third Avenue, and Lester went up against his old firm Fischbein Badillo, arguing that the warehouse on the proposed site was supposed to revert to residential usage because no commercial activity had occurred there for a consecutive two-year period.

Fischbein Badillo argued that the warehouse had never been deserted. The lawyers produced work logs kept by the warehouse's owner, even though it was hard to believe the warehouse had been up and running—the electricity had been turned off, and there were pigeons nesting inside the building.

Richard Fischbein also argued that the locals were being racist: They opposed Toys 'R' Us because it would attract large numbers of residents from north of 96th Street to shop in their district. "People did not want blacks and Puerto Ricans coming into the neighborhood," says Fischbein, who also lives in the area. "You see it. You smell it. You *know* it. I was a legal-services attorney representing the Black Panther Party. I'm the administrator of the Tupac Shakur estate. You don't have to be a chicken to tell a rotten egg."

In the fall of 1996, after a two-year struggle in which Toys 'R' Us had won two rounds in the lower courts, Lester was fired by Neighbors 'R' Us, the local group that had engaged him; members felt he was too in love with the limelight. And that December, the New York State Court of Appeals finally agreed with Neighbors 'R' Us and their new lawyer, zoning expert Norman Marcus.

The locals have since changed their minds about having a commercial enterprise on the site. Eli Zabar has opened an upscale gourmet-food market there—fava-bean salad being preferable to Beanie Babies, evidently.

COMMUNITY LAW CAME OF AGE IN THE early nineties, as activists on the Upper West Side were rising up against the SROs, rehab clinics, and homeless shelters the city was insistently dumping in the area. It was then that NIMBYism started looking respectable—perhaps because the agitated residents were ultimately successful in keeping similar new facilities out: While the majority of those operations existing at the time of the rebellion remained in place, monitored by community-advice boards (CABS), only a handful have been placed on the Upper West Side since 1994. Says one member of Community Board Seven, "There's less money for that now [with Giuliani in office]. But also, providers don't want to come into a neighborhood where they're not wanted." She reflects for a moment and then continues: "Our bigger concern right now is with jazz clubs and cigar bars." Call it a sign of the times.

The battle on the Upper West Side "was a turning point," says SoHo councilwoman Kathryn Freed. "Very liberal communities who honestly felt they should bear their burden suddenly woke up."

Freed, perhaps the most visible neighborhood activist in the city, has been known to kick back with a cocktail in hand at trendy nightspots in her district like Balthazar—owner Keith McNally took great pains to befriend her, say other local bar owners. But officially, she opposes the influx of more tourists and late-night bars in SoHo.

Freed was lobbying from the cradle, and in scarier times. She handed out flyers at Pennsylvania's York County Shopping Center with her mom in 1960. Senator John F. Kennedy was going to be speaking at Pennsylvania's state fair in her hometown, and York County was overwhelmingly Republican. "People sicced their dogs on us," she remembers.

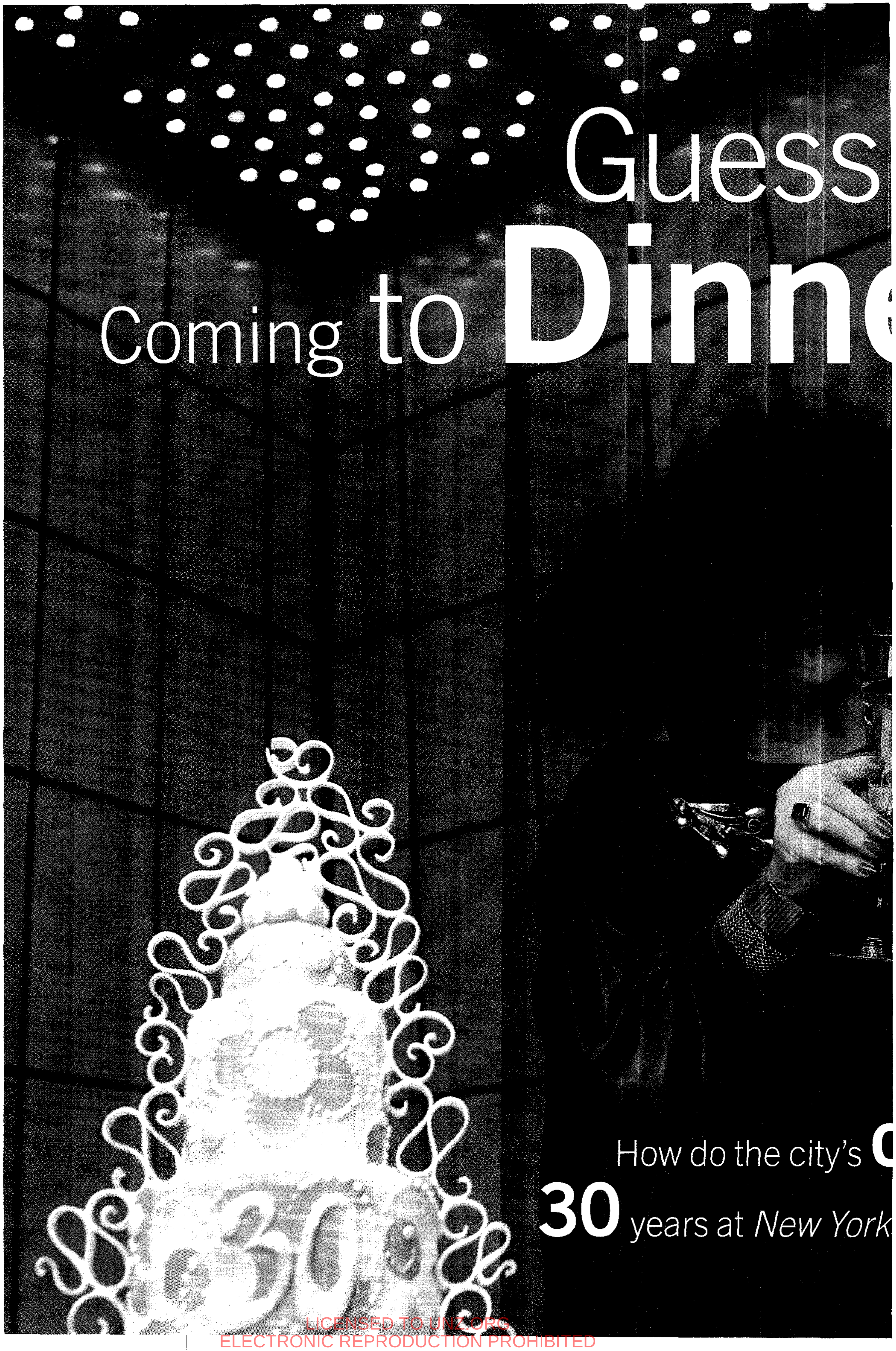
Freed moved to New York the same week the Woodstock festival was raging upstate. A self-confessed hippie who lived in jeans and allowed her long red curly hair to reach her waist, Freed says she took her degree in political science and came to New York to be with a boyfriend who was attending NYU. At the time, downtown was fighting the Lower Manhattan Expressway, and Freed decided to get involved, working the phones to drum up opposition. As a McGovern supporter, she worked with the Downtown Independent Democrats. Freed took a job writing contracts for Equitable Life Assurance and then had a stint as a cabdriver, but mostly, she says, she was working on community issues in her cramped Thompson Street tenement.

Freed moved to TriBeCa before enrolling at New York Law School: "We all lived illegally in these loft buildings. In 1975, I got involved with the Lower Manhattan Loft Tenants. I helped write the Loft Law, which granted residential rights to tenants in 1980."

Finally, she was elected to the City Council in 1991. It was Freed who made an unsuccessful bid to delay construction on the SoHo Grand Hotel, arguing that the community

(continued on page 72)

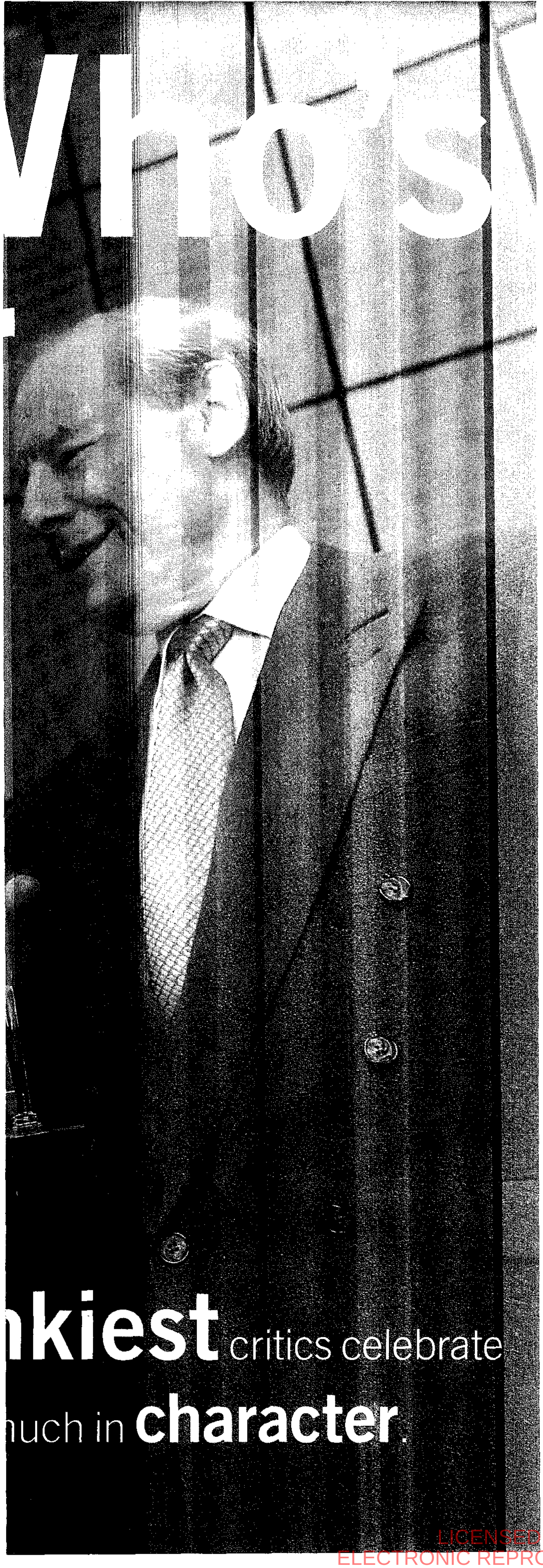
Photograph by Michael McLaughlin.



Guess
Coming to Dinne

How do the city's

30 years at *New York*



Scene:

A small corner booth in
the Grill Room of The Four Seasons,
a little past 8 P.M.

The Cast:

John Simon

fearsome Serbian-born
theater critic and curmudgeon

Gael Greene

lusty food critic and author

Maer Roshan

their chaperon and editor.

●

G.G.: [*Scanning the menu*] Ooh, crisp farmhouse duck. It's one of their specialties.
J.S.: I don't eat duck, because I actually like ducks. I feel sort of anthropophagous if I eat a duck, because ducks are my friends.
G.G.: I try not to be so attached to anything that I can't eat it.
M.R.: John feels the same way about the people he reviews.
J.S.: That's right. Absolutely.
G.G.: If I order a duck, will you be positively depressed?
J.S.: No, because you will be eating it, and not I. I'm going for the baby octopus.
G.G.: [*Laughs*] Because you feel nothing for babies.
M.R.: Gael, do people recognize you when you venture out?
J.S.: I thought you'd be wearing a ski mask or something like that to be unrecognizable.
G.G.: It's impossible *not* to be recognized here. I used to have credit cards with other names—now, perhaps 75 percent of the time, someone from the restaurant will recognize me.
J.S.: Then how can you review the service?
G.G.: I look around and see if other people have anguish on their faces while we're surrounded by waiters.

Photograph by Karen Kuehn

Waiter: How's the wine?

G.G.: Well, it's a little sharp right now, but I'm hoping it will soften.

J.S.: That comes from keeping our company.

M.R.: So, when was the last time you were together, you and John?

J.S.: *Together* in what sense of the word?

M.R.: [*Laughs*] I don't even want to know.

G.G.: The only place we have ever been together is at La Colombe d'Or.

J.S.: That's one instance.

G.G.: Oh, I don't remember the other.

J.S.: You see? I make such a feeble impression upon you. The other time was in a back room of this very restaurant.

G.G.: Oh, that I let go. La Colombe d'Or is in my memory because you were on a date. [*A beat*] With a married woman . . .

J.S.: And *you* were there with a porn star, right?

G.G.: I was there with my porn star.

J.S.: What was his name? Jamie something?

G.G.: Gillis. He was a wonderful companion. It turned out you had insulted him in some review. Though I don't know *how* you happened to be reviewing porn films.

> **JS:** How can you review the **service** if everyone **recognizes** you? **GG:** I look around and see

J.S.: Just lucky, I guess. The porn star was a nice fellow.

G.G.: I was a little cross at John's date. I had written an article called "The Joys of Not Having Children," and she and her husband had decided not to have children because of my article, and then she went on to make non-parenthood an entire industry. John was traveling with her. We were in the south of France.

M.R.: Wait. John reviewed *porn flicks*?

J.S.: No, no . . . There were one or two *major* porn films at that time that were getting serious attention. It was called *Something About Joanna*. No. *The* something *of Joanna*. That's what he was in. It was not only a porn movie, it was S&M, but I guess all porn sooner or later turns into S&M—it's the nature of the beast.

G.G.: Well, I don't know . . . Most of life is S&M.

M.R.: The conversation is getting deep very quickly.

G.G.: Work is somehow more sadistic than most sex—alas. Alas twice.

J.S.: Maer, do you think I should remind Gael of our last encounter at The Four Seasons?

M.R.: Oh, yes. It's a good story. And you've waited fifteen years to deliver the punch line.

J.S.: Well, the story takes place right here at The Four Seasons. It was a lunch for *New York* advertisers, and the speakers included Nick Pileggi, and you, and me. And we were all instructed that because these people had a brief lunch period, we were not to speak more than five minutes. So Nick Pileggi, very graciously, spoke for five minutes. I, equally well-behaved, spoke for five minutes. But Gael had just written a novel, and she was so full of the glory of being a novelist that she went on for some twenty minutes.

G.G.: No! I can't believe it! When I'm not being paid, I like to be very brief.

J.S.: Well, we *were* getting a free lunch. But I guess you get that anyway. Anyway, you began your talk by saying, "When I came on the scene as a food commentator, there were three major innovations: The quiche, the Cuisinart, and the clitoris." After we spoke, there was a question period. And I was going to ask you a slightly rude question, but you had been so nice that I couldn't bring myself to be beastly to you: "Miss Greene, as the proud possessor of at least two of those three wonderful things, which one would you say chops finer?"

G.G.: Oh, God. You swine!

J.S.: But you see, I forbore.

M.R.: Now, play nice. The problem with going out to a restaurant with a food critic is you never get to finish your food. Gael makes you keep passing it.

G.G.: Well, usually that's the case. But when I'm with a cantankerous old man like John, I let him have his own dish and just take a taste of it.

M.R.: What do you think is your main task as a critic?

J.S.: It's to write well enough to meet my standards and amusingly enough to make it enjoyable for others. The sad fact is, most criticism is written by people who don't feel that anything is at stake—unless it's steak au poivre.

G.G.: A lot is at stake! A restaurant could fold, and thousands do. Most of them fold within two or three years.

J.S.: Yes, but that's their problem, not yours, necessarily.

G.G.: You want to be sure that you're not judging too quickly. In the case of Le Cirque, I went six or eight times before I wrote something critical.

J.S.: What's enviable about your situation, Gael, is that you have an embarrassment of riches. Whereas with theater, it's often just an embarrassment—not of riches.

G.G.: You're right. I can go anywhere—even to Queens, as we did last night. We stumbled on this restaurant that was *fantastic*.

M.R.: See, John, you could go see some experimental theater in Queens.

J.S.: In Queens you would certainly not find anything experimental. If you mean the Borough of Queens. [*Laughs*] But the trouble with covering experimental things, as bitter experience has taught me, is that they are usually even worse than commercial things. I don't want to be the kind of critic who roots like some kind of truffle hound for buried wonders. I see my job as being the one who waits until this experimental thing has been discovered by others, has been praised to the skies, and makes it to, say, Broadway . . .

M.R.: And *then* you shoot it down.

J.S.: Not necessarily. I tell them the truth as I see it.

M.R.: Some complain that you're stuck in the Stone Age, that culture has moved on while your tastes have remained fixed.

J.S.: The culture has now reached the point where it has *no* standards at all. Therefore, to have any kind of standards, old, middle-aged, Stone Age . . . However, the Stone Age of the theater may be now! If I'm stuck in it, I'm absolutely up-to-the-minute.

G.G.: Thank God for John. He's holding out.

J.S.: Do you get lots of hate letters, Gael?

G.G.: Not enough. I get the most wonderful letters from readers, especially women wanting to give me to their husbands for their birthday. "My husband loves food, loves dining, he's a wonderful chef; his dream would be to have dinner with you."

M.R.: John, *you* get interesting mail.

G.G.: People who want to go to the theater with you?

J.S.: No. They want me to stop going to the theater altogether. [*Laughs*]

G.G.: Have they offered you interesting jobs in other fields?

J.S.: Well, if you mean the Elysian Fields . . . [*Laughs*] They generally invite me to drop dead.

M.R.: Is Sylvia Miles the *only* person who ever threw something at you?

J.S.: So far, yes.

G.G.: No one has ever thrown anything at me. [*Laughs*] I just know I'm not mean enough.

J.S.: Well, in the food business, perhaps they have too much respect for food to throw it away.

M.R.: Has anyone tried to bribe you?

G.G.: Tiny little things, like giving an extra dish or leaving a second bottle of wine off the bill. Or trying to make me the guest for dinner, which, of course, I can't accept.

J.S.: No one has ever offered a fourth act if other people have **anguish** on their faces while **we** are surrounded by **waiters.**

of a three-act play to make me happier.

M.R.: I was rather surprised to read a quote from John in the *Paris Review* in which he said, "The most important attributes in a critic are to be likable and modest." I was wondering, John, which one of those traits you think *most* applies to you.

J.S.: I've never ever said that! That's somebody maligning me.

G.G.: John must have been on something. He'd *never* say a critic should be liked.

J.S.: What I may have said is "readable, entertaining," which somehow may have been corrupted into "likable." And "modest," yes. Modest in the sense that one puts oneself second and whatever good there may be in the play first.

M.R.: Has anyone ever threatened to kick your ass?

J.S.: There was a while back a producer ooking to off me. He said he was going o take out a contract on my life.

G.G.: How clever. I do get postcards very often from someone who signs herself 'Sister Veronica," bitterly denouncing me whenever I say anything positive about veal or foie gras.

M.R.: I was wondering how you can review people who are your friends.

G.G.: It's very hard. It's much easier to be brutal with someone you've never met.

.S.: If you *must* befriend people in your business, the trick is to do it selectively. One doesn't befriend a lousy actor.

M.R.: You started off as a film writer, ohn, right?

.S.: I started out as a freelance critic of various stuff—theater, movies, literature, fine arts quite a bit, dance occasionally. I ove all the arts. Now I am also classical-music columnist for *The New Leader.*

G.G.: John, when do you have time to do hese things?

.S.: I don't have children, which you don't have, either.

G.G.: We have more in common than I hought.

.S.: Well, I think all critics who are serious about what they do have something n common. I don't give a damn about sports, which take up most people's lives. follow tennis, but that's it.

G.G.: How about dancing? I love dancing.

.S.: I don't. I like ballet, but I don't like social dancing, though I did it as a kid. Naturally, all kids dance.

G.G.: But how about during the seventies, when everybody went dancing every night?

M.R.: Haven't you seen all the pictures? Every night at Studio 54—it was Calvin and Bianca and Halston and John Simon.

G.G.: I used to go dancing every night of my life. Every night I would go to Xenon, Regine's, or the Ice Palace. But not Studio 54. I couldn't get past the door. Ian Schrager once gave me a tattered piece of paper with his name, saying, "Let this woman in." The first time it worked, the second time the doorman said, "What is this piece of shit?" and turned me away in front of my date. I was so embarrassed. I never went back. [*Looking around*] Here is something very interesting that didn't exist when I started. Tables full of women. I noticed it last night at Gramercy Tavern. Thirty years ago, you'd never see groups of women sitting together at a fancy restaurant.

M.R.: Well, women are making more money now than they once did.

J.S.: And more of them have come out of the closet, too.

M.R.: John seems to be a bit preoccupied with the subject, don't you think, Gael?

G.G.: Yes. Do you have a thing about gay people?

J.S.: Well, yes and no. The theater is terribly, monotonously homosexual.

M.R.: Perhaps, given your natural prejudices, you should recuse yourself from seeing gay plays at all.

J.S.: Then I'd stay home much of the time.

M.R.: There's a thought.

J.S.: I don't buy the supposed neutrality of the typical reviewer who falls for all sorts of politically correct trash. Take Liz Smith, for example. It's a sorry society in which a phony-baloney flack like her passes for a critic. At every play there's a sign with huge letters, I LOVE IT. LIZ SMITH. And she loves every piece of garbage.

G.G.: There's a huge audience for things that you hate, John.

J.S.: But a discriminating one for the things I like.

M.R.: Have you ever thought of writing a play or opening a restaurant yourself?

G.G.: No. Knowing all I know, the *last* thing I would do is open a restaurant.

J.S.: In college I wrote plays, but that's okay when you're a student. Though I can't imagine students writing the kinds of plays adults are writing now. These days its hard to find anyone to go to plays. Most people know how bad the theater is.

G.G.: I think restaurants have taken the place of theater, sex, and dancing.

J.S.: Well, it's true that when I started writing, to go to a restaurant was not a night out. It was the preamble to something else.

M.R.: What do you think is the best thing that's happened to the culture in terms of restaurants?

G.G.: The nouvelle cuisine before it went overboard—because it freed chefs from classic rigidity, made them fiercely demanding in the market. American chefs, the great product revolution, boutique farms, heirloom vegetables. The bread in New York. The desserts! So much has happened since I started writing about food. I could *never* be bored.

J.S.: Not much has happened in theater, I'm afraid. There is a certain attempt nowadays to produce an occasional obscure play by Shakespeare, perhaps a little more often than used to be done. And there are certainly so-called avant-garde playwrights, who are not all that avant-garde by my understanding, but still different and nice in a way. I mean, there is a woman called Paula Vogel, a lesbian playwright, whom I have come to like quite a bit. There are also certain disappointments. Someone like Lanford Wilson, who was going great-guns for a while, has now practically written himself out of the picture.

M.R.: Do either of you think you've mellowed at all?

G.G.: Not at all. In fact, I'm crankier.

J.S.: I don't care. I don't see anything wrong with mellowing. I don't see anything wrong with not mellowing, either.

G.G.: I do feel optimistic about the future of food. I used to worry that we'd all end up eating little capsules or Soylent Green, but now boutique farms are producing 50 varieties of tomatoes, and immigrants are pouring in from countries I've never heard of, eager to open new restaurants. On the other hand, it's getting very expensive. The most modest restaurants think they're Le Bernardin.

M.R.: [*To sommelier*] No wine from 1968?

Owner: I tried looking *everywhere.* No. We don't have anything here that old.

G.G.: How about *my* birth year, 1945?

Owner: [*Skeptically*] '45? . . . Uh, yes.

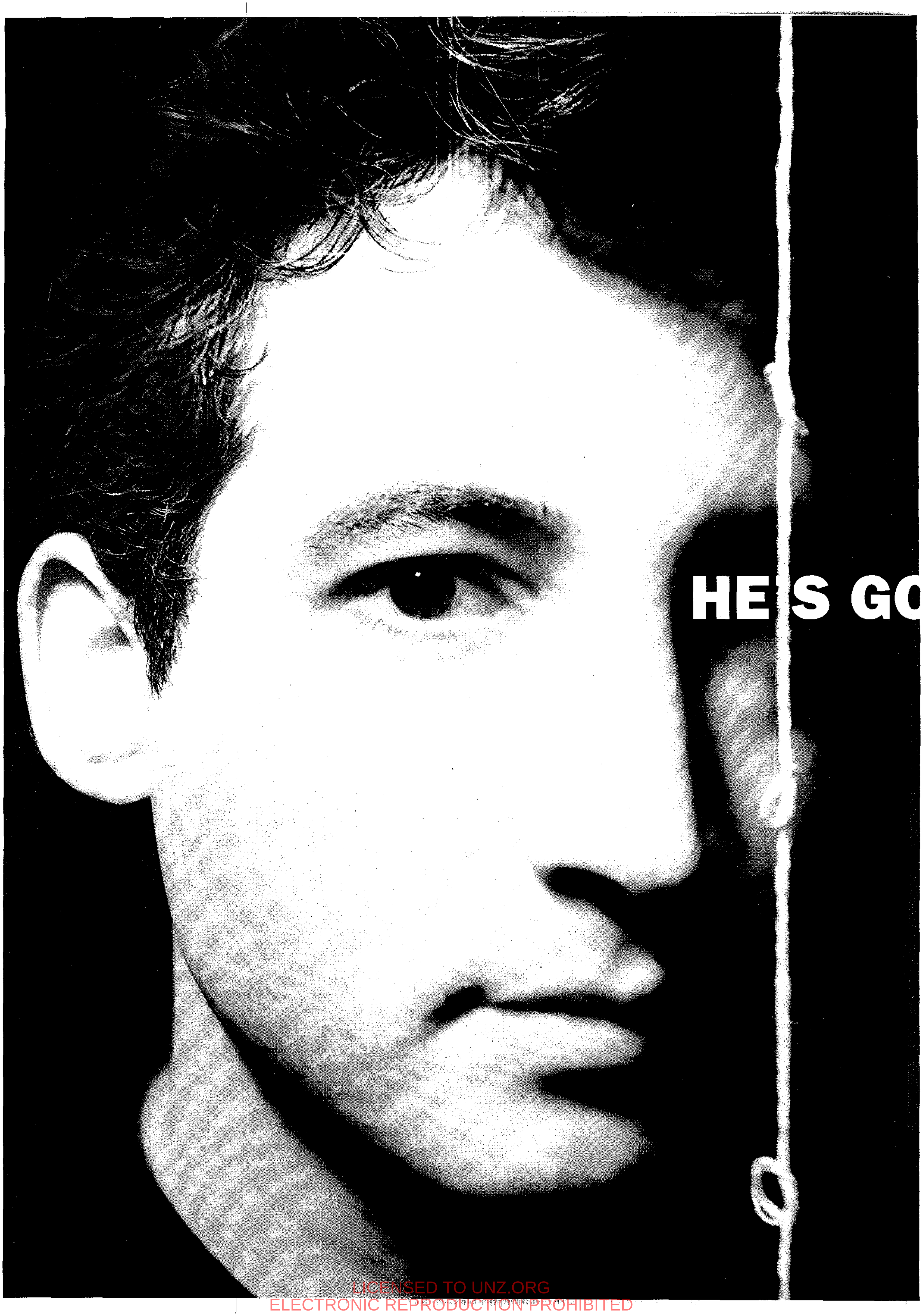
J.S.: I guess a wine from *my* birth year would cost way too much.

M.R.: We should have something for a toast. Not to get maudlin, but I wanted to toast you, John and Gael, who over 30 years have taught a lot of us about standards and professionalism and, most of all, about stubborn perseverance.

G.G.: Oh, what a graceful toast! John, where's my glass? Thank you. Let's clink glasses. To 30 more years.

J.S.: Ah, perish the thought! ■

hotograph: preceding page, grooming by Jane Harrison; cake by Margaret Braun Cake Decorations; hat by Sylvia Richards from the Hat Shop, NYC.



HE'S GO

STRING THEORY IS THE HOTTEST development in physics since Stephen Hawking first peered into a black hole—and Columbia physicist Brian Greene is one of the few people who can explain it. He also acts in Pinter plays and packs lecture halls, and his new book, *The Elegant Universe,* is getting rapturous advance reviews. Has the Theory of Everything finally found the spokesman it deserves?

BY JENNIFER SENIOR

HE WORLD ON A STRING

FOR SOME PEOPLE, CHARTING THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE UNIVERSE IS EASier than locating the wormholes in their own apartments. Brian Greene, a boyish, mediagenic Columbia physics professor, is wandering helplessly around his living room in Morningside Heights, trying to find an autographed picture of John Lithgow. He scans the bookcase, whose shelves are studded with hiking guides, Camus novels, and videotapes of physics symposia from all over the world. He pulls down a stack of folders, lecture notes, and yellowing newspapers, and begins to sift. ■ Greene received the photograph a year ago, after helping a Hollywood friend punch up some dialogue for NBC's *3rd Rock From the Sun.* On the show, Lithgow plays a crackbrained physics professor from outer space, and as a point of professional pride, he likes his science patter to make sense. Greene was delighted to pitch in. He's always had a peripheral interest in show business. In his spare time, he studies acting; and in 1995, while teaching at Cornell, he performed in a community-theater production of a Harold Pinter play. Right now he's trying to drum up funding for a three-part public-television

PHOTOGRAPH BY SILVIA OTTE

series on physics starring, potentially, himself. But Brian Greene isn't just a physicist who'd like to play one on TV. At 36, he holds tenured positions in both the math and the physics departments at Columbia University, and adjunct professorships at Cornell and Duke. His specialty is string theory, the spellbinding, diabolically complicated school of physics that attempts to describe everything in the known universe from quarks to supernovas. Ed Witten, the Princeton colossus who has dominated string theory for more than a decade, believes that Greene is one of the top three or four string theorists of his generation—and string theorists are some of the brightest people on the planet. They may be the ones to finally pick up where Einstein, at the lonely and frustrated end of his career, left off: with a unified field theory of the cosmos.

Greene finally finds the Lithgow picture in a manila envelope, buried in a loose pile of family photographs. "Brian," the inscription says. "Thank you for your equations on quantum chromodynamics. John." Greene smiles. "It was so cool," he says, "to hear John Lithgow talking about quark jets."

STRING THEORY, ALSO KNOWN AS superstring theory, has been around since the late sixties, but only in 1984 did a surge of persuasive new data start forcing scientists to reckon with its claims. Suddenly, conferences were being held, MacArthur "genius" awards were being given, and a moniker was born: "the Theory of Everything." The term still gives some physicists, including Greene, a rash.

Now the field of string theory is white-hot, luring the physics world's bright young stars deep into the hearts of the universe's collapsing ones. Harvard's last two physics hires were string theorists, and breakthroughs in the discipline are eagerly reported by the mainstream press. (Last July, when a group of physicists opened a banquet with a song about string theory set to the tune of "The Macarena," even *that* made the science section of the New York *Times*.) The attention has excited resentment and envy in some scientists, particularly those who see string theory as a fad whose charms are overblown. "Don't tell anyone in my department this," a Princeton graduate student confessed to me recently as he was making his way over to the math building, "but I'm a closet string theorist."

For all that it promises, string theory has never been proved experimentally. But if what it says is correct, the basic inconsistencies of twentieth-century physics will wondrously evaporate. The theory rests on a very simple premise: that the smallest building blocks of the universe—muons, photons, gluons, and all those other particles that sound like Santa's reindeer—are generated by the vibrations of tiny, quivering loops of string. The whole universe is made up of them, *tied up* with them, if you prefer, as if the cosmos were a shimmering aeolian harp.

Actually, that last image is stolen from Greene's first book, *The Elegant Universe*, which will start appearing in stores next week. *Publishers Weekly* has already given Greene a rapturous write-up ("He possesses a remarkable gift for using the everyday to illustrate what may be going on in dimensions beyond our feeble human perception"), and *Kirkus Reviews* declared the book "possibly the clearest popular treatment to date of this complex subject." W.W. Norton & Company, Greene's publisher, hopes he can do for string theory what Stephen Jay Gould did for evolution, Stephen Hawking for black holes, and Richard Feynman for quantum electrodynamics: give science a friendly face, and make a chart-busting best-seller out of a rarefied subject.

If anyone can make string theory accessible, Greene can. All of his colleagues agree he's a whiz at explaining things, the kind of person who can make counterintuitive concepts—like the warping of time, for example, or the curving of space—seem as normal and natural as rain. Thanks to Stephen Hawking, the public's appetite for books about particle physics and cosmology has also swollen considerably in recent years; *A Brief History of Time* stayed on the best-seller list for months, even though almost no one understood a word of it.

Greene has an advantage over Hawking. *The Elegant Universe* is actually comprehensible. In many places, it's even compulsively readable. Greene is funny and handy with metaphors, using such diverse examples as peach pits, insider trading, and ants on a garden hose to illuminate his basic points. Small wonder that he had at least three New York publishing houses vying for the rights to the book.

Of course, string theory won't really have arrived—the way chaos theory did a few years ago—until Michael Crichton puts it in a novel and Jeff Goldblum starts nattering about it in *Jurassic Park III*. But here again, Greene may prove useful, because an appealing messenger will surely hasten the dissemination of the string gospel. In a field full of men who tend to look as if they were drawn by naughty, drunken cartoonists (the thick glasses, the wild hair, the asexual posture), Greene is a striking standout, and it's not just because he's attractive and wears contacts. In high school, Greene won math competitions *and* judo tournaments. At Harvard, he performed in musicals. At Oxford, he hung out with George Stephanopoulos.

"Physicists tend to be introverted," says Frank Wilczek, a leading particle physicist at Princeton's Institute for Advanced Study. "Brian's definitely at the extroverted end of the spectrum. And the charismatic end." He giggles. (Wilczek giggles a lot. When he first hatched the concept of the axion particle, he named it after a laundry detergent. Just for a giggle.) "Physics requires the kind of personality that's ready to sit down for a long time and learn difficult things and do abstract calculations," he continues. "That's almost the polar opposite of interacting with people—and having fun." His peers, he notes, aren't particularly glamorous. "Physics is far removed from primal urges. It has nothing to do with sex, power, or getting fed."

Greene probably got some of his expansiveness from his father, Alan Greene, a composer, vocal coach, and former vaudevillian. He and Brian's mother, Rita, encouraged their children to express themselves, and it seems to have worked. "I consider lecturing a form of performance," Brian often says, and clearly, those acting lessons have paid off.

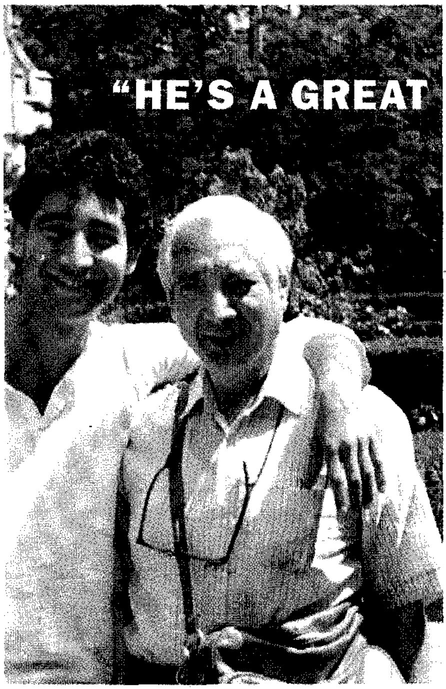
"He has this great reputation," says Greg Langmead, a 25-year-old graduate student in the Columbia math department. "Even among students who haven't taken anything with him. He's a great communicator, he's charismatic, he's clearly top-of-the-heap intellectually. So the fact that he has gobs of raw physical appeal on top of that—it gives him a really serious mystique."

Yet what's good for booksellers, readers, and students may not be good for Greene's own career as a scientist. When he first started writing *The Elegant Uni-*

verse, Greene didn't even tell most of his colleagues. "Brian wasn't sure the community would place the same value on this kind of communication as he did," says David Morrison, a Duke University mathematician with whom Greene did groundbreaking research. "I think he was concerned that people would think he'd left the playing field."

It's a realistic anxiety for theoretical physicists, who, as a rule, burn out early. Most have done their best work by 40, and some peak even sooner than that. (Einstein came up with the theory of relativity at 26.) So the question naturally arises: Why would Greene, still in his prime, squander his energies on a popular book for the muddling innumerate, particularly when there's still so much work to be done? *The Elegant Universe* took two years to write, so naturally his colleagues are concerned. "I think really highly of Brian," says Ed Witten. "But I'm glad he's finished writing his book." Why? He pauses. "Oh, I think maybe, perhaps, it slowed him down," he says. "Researchwise."

Greene says it didn't, but there are other worries. String theory, for all its hype, is still a young discipline. Some fear that if Greene's book is a big success, it might mislead the public and lure too much talent away from other important areas of research. "I do see some danger," admits Frank Wilczek. "People may not realize this is not yet an established theory, and also . . ." He trails off. "You know what Gresham's law is, right? That bad currency drives out the good? One thing science doesn't need is to be turned into mysticism. So I can only hope that Brian did a good job."



"HE'S A GREAT COMMUNICATOR, HE'S CHARISMATIC, he's clearly top-of-the-heap intellectually. So the fact that he has gobs of raw physical appeal on top of that—it gives him a really serious mystique."

Boy genius: Clockwise from top, Greene at Harvard, 1993; at the U.S. Judo Championships, 1972; in a 1995 stage production of Harold Pinter's *Betrayal* in Ithaca, New York; with his sister Wendy, 1969; and with his father in Oxford, 1985.

ON THE NINTH FLOOR OF THE PUPIN Building, at the north end of the Columbia campus, Greene is standing outside his locked office door, sifting through a Ziploc bag full of loose keys. There must be 30 or 40 of them, all of nearly identical shape and size. He broke his key chain a few months ago and has been toting around this clanking bundle ever since.

"I don't think it's here."

He checks a few pouches of his shoulder bag. He reinspects the Ziploc bag. Then he checks his pocket. Eureka.

Greene's failure to do the obvious—*buy a new key chain*—is one of the ways that he *does* conform to the stereotype of the befuddled, I'm-too-distracted-to-tuck-in-my-shirt kind of physicist, the kind who floats through life in a vapor of deep thoughts. Another is that he can't seem to remember names and numbers, including the room number of his second office in Columbia's math department. Ellen Archer, his girlfriend (she's an actress, naturally), says that sometimes while he's driving, she'll notice that the car has suddenly slowed to a crawl, so lost is he in the caverns of his own mind. She remembers leaving him alone once at a party with one of her overtalkative friends. An hour later she found him in the same place, her friend still gabbling and burbling away like an open wound. "I'm so sorry to have stranded you," she told Greene after rescuing him. "It's okay," he told her. "I was solving equations."

Greene throws open the door, and we step into his office. The place is a disaster. There are carpet swatches and paint samples sitting on a broken chair, and big, white blotches of spackle polka-dot the walls. Inexplicably, a psychiatrist's couch sits off to the right. The place has been under renovation for two years.

Greene readily admits that he has always been a slob. His senior year, the Harvard yearbook ran a photo of his room as the supreme exemplar of undergraduate slumminess. "When you have this sense," he tries to explain, "that at rock bottom, there is a coherence, a simplicity, an explanatory core to the universe, I don't know, perhaps it gives you a certain license . . ." He stops. "Okay. Maybe I'm just trying to rationalize not putting my clothes in the hamper."

By age 5, Greene was already a typical prodigy, multiplying 30-digit numbers by 30-digit numbers on huge pieces of construction paper he'd taped together to accommodate his scrawling. His sixth-grade teacher (at I.S. 44, on the Upper West Side) sent him to Columbia with a note to the math department imploring someone, anyone, to please take him on and make use of his talents. At Stuyvesant High School, Greene was a Westinghouse finalist and won citywide math competitions four years in a row. He graduated in the top ten of his class at Harvard and won a Rhodes scholarship.

While he was at Oxford, Greene called up the man who would later become his postdoctoral adviser and politely pointed out an error in a paper he'd just published. ("I was surprised, then very impressed," says Shing-Tung Yau, the humbled professor.) At 30, Greene received a Young Investigator's Award from the National Science Foundation, and one year later, he won an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation fellowship. By then he was teaching in the Cornell physics department; and at 34, he was recruited by Columbia.

Columbia wanted Greene because both the math and the physics departments decided they needed a leading figure in string theory. (Because it is so intensely theoretical, string theory requires as much sophistication in math as it does in physics.) Greene, a switch-hitter, filled the bill perfectly. The university sweetened the deal with the prospect of letting him build his own small string-theory fiefdom, fortified by bright young graduate students and additional faculty.

Greene's legacy may amount to even more than a fiefdom; it could be a modest empire. He and several colleagues just received a $2.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation to restructure high-level courses in the Columbia math department, with the hope of broadening their application to physics.

GREENE IS MAKING HIS WAY OVER TO Room 831, where he teaches a quantum-field-theory class to students at both Columbia and Duke, with an assist from a video-teleconferencing hookup. He's late. On the way there, he runs into Samuel Devons, a stooped gray eminence with squinty eyes, a cane, and a long beard. Devons looks at Greene once, twice, then three times before recognizing him. "Oh," he finally says. "It's you! Hello." The two men chat briefly, then Greene hurries on to his class. "He's a real deep thinker," Greene explains.

In the classroom, there's a huge television monitor attached to a video camera sitting at the front of the room. Onscreen, he can see the grainy image of a professor and a couple of students waiting at Duke. Greene slings a microphone around his neck, steps in front of the TV, and waves hello to the people in Durham. "You're late," one of the grainy faces scolds. "I know," Greene replies. "But everyone's so late to this class. I guess I got lax." He hoists his foot up onto the table and starts tying his shoe. Meanwhile, his Columbia students are still trickling in. Almost all of them are men. Almost all of them wear T-shirts and flannel. Almost all of them have astonishing amounts of hair. Before long, the room is practically full.

"Greene is a messianic teacher," says Norman Christ, the chairman of the Columbia physics department. "When he teaches, as many people who can fit in the room will be there."

Students adore him. He makes physics funny, they gush, and he explains complicated ideas with diamond clarity. He also knows how to make people relax. "Sometimes," recalls Shani Offen, one of Greene's former students, "he would throw out questions in the middle of his lectures, like 'So then we add two and two and we get . . . Anyone?' "

Greene chats casually with a student at Duke for a few more minutes ("So, Chris, how's the Higgs mechanism?") before gazing up and asking if anyone has any questions. Silence. "Uh, is anybody here?" he asks. Smiles. Then he's off to the chalkboard, scribbling furiously, until he has completely surrounded himself with a confetti halo of numbers and Greek superscripts.

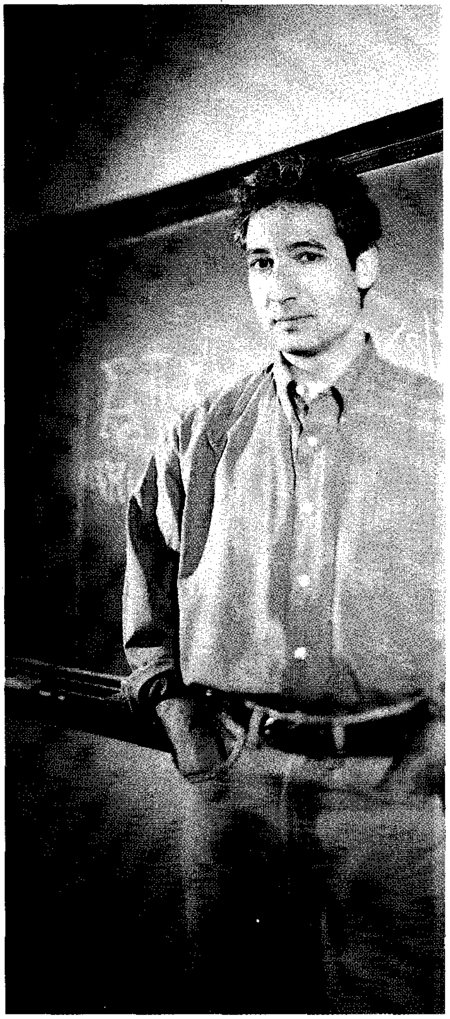
BRIAN GREENE FIRST HEARD ABOUT STRING theory on a bitter, blustery day in 1985. Walking by Blackwell's, a famous bookstore near the Oxford campus, he spotted a flyer for a lecture on "The Theory of Everything." He went. He saw. He was immediately conquered, though he has a hard time articulating why. The best he can do is invoke an even earlier memory of a subway ride he took when he was a teenager.

"I was feeling that way that adolescents sometimes get," he recalls. "You know—'What does it all mean? What is life all about?' The usual questions. And I remember thinking, 'Well, people have thought about these issues for ages, and it's not likely that I'm going to have any answers.' But it did occur to me that if I was able to get a thorough familiarity of what the questions *actually were*—how is it that there are stars and galaxies and planets and people?—I would get a certain kind of satisfaction."

String theory reconciles two previously incompatible tenets of twentieth-century physics: the theory of general relativity (which describes the behavior of very large things, like the steady outward streaming of the galaxies) and quantum mechanics (which describes very small things, like the flighty path of an electron). The former supposes that space is gently curving; the latter implies that space is jittery and unpredictable. String theory modifies Einstein's theory in just such a way that these two conceptions of space are brought into alignment.

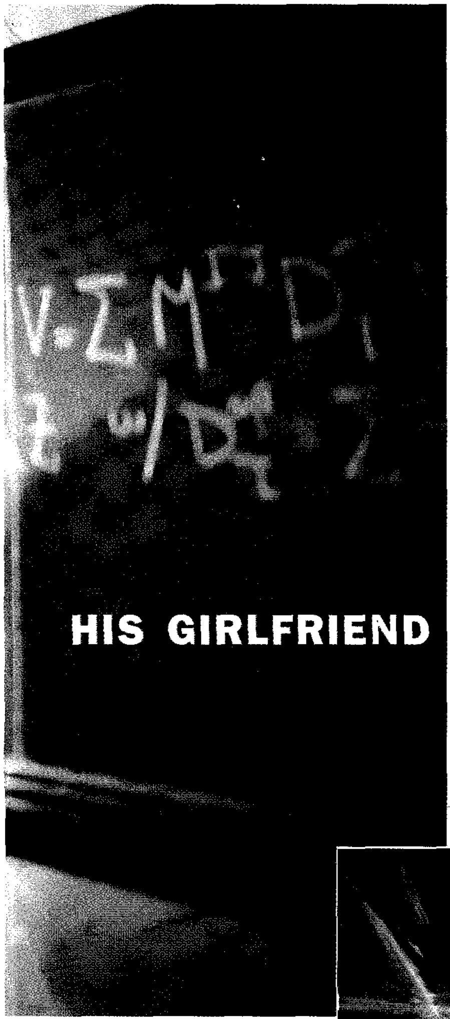
During the past five years, string theorists have made exhilarating strides. They posit some pretty wild notions, including the existence of eleven dimensions, a concept that Greene very clearly and engagingly explains in *The Elegant Universe.* Even as far back as the seventies, physicists knew that string theory predicted gravity—without relying on the theories of Einstein or Newton—proving, to some skeptics, that string theory was at least on the right track.

Greene made his first major contribution eight years ago, when he discovered with Ronen Plesser, now a physicist at Duke, that for every possible shape of the cosmos, there is a "mirror shape" that generates an alternate universe with exactly the same properties. Then, in 1993, while he was working at the Institute for Advanced Study, he and colleagues Paul Aspinwall and David Morrison made another breakthrough. After months of handwritten calculations, they realized that the fabric of space can *tear,* meaning the universe can change shape by ripping itself apart and coming back together again in a completely different form—a far more exotic contortion of space than Einstein had ever dreamed. When their computer spit out the final result they were hoping for, Greene shot out of his



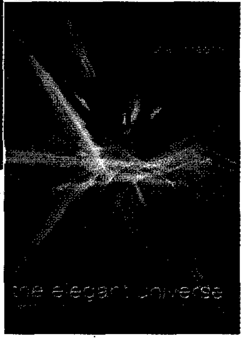
chair and started running around the room. “You know, like the guys who score a touchdown,” he says. “They spike the ball, they flip over backwards, they do a little victory dance.”

At the moment, Greene is working with several colleagues on a notion that not only overthrows conventional wisdom but plays pixie tricks with your head. They are postulating that space and time, concepts we take for granted as irrefutable aspects of everyday life, are in fact only vague approximations. Space, they think, only seems like space *to us.* And time, they think, only feels like time *to us.* But if human beings were smaller, they’d see that space and time were merely the perceivable facets of a much more nuanced series of organizing principles—the same way that crude patterns are the only thing one sees, at first, when thumbing through the pages of a Magic Eye book. “So if we were born not 20 inches long, but 10-to-the-minus-33 inches long—that’s a billionth of a trillionth of a trillionth of an inch—then we would know what those organizing principles were,” says Greene. “They would be of second nature to us, just like time and space.”



Popular scientist: Greene in his Columbia classroom.

HIS GIRLFRIEND ONCE LEFT HIM ALONE at a party with one of her overtalkative friends. “I’m so sorry to have stranded you,” she told Greene an hour later, after rescuing him. “It’s okay,” he said. “I was solving equations.”



Not surprisingly, string theory still has some high-profile and well-respected detractors. Sheldon Glashow, a Nobel Prize–winning particle physicist at Harvard, was once so virulently skeptical that he questioned whether string theorists should even “be paid by physics departments and allowed to pervert impressionable students.” Today, he has softened his views, primarily because he thinks string theorists have become humbler. But he’s still skeptical. “String theory’s biggest prediction is that gravity exists,” he says. “That’s good. That’s a lot more than preceding theories could do. But it’s not enough . . . I mean . . . *there.* I just proved it, too. I just dropped a pencil.”

He has a point. Perhaps never in the history of physics has theory been so far ahead of experiment. String theorists, by and large, tend to be the kinds of fellows who scribble calculations on the backs of envelopes rather than the kinds who smash atoms. “I suppose I’m worried,” says Glashow, “that someday there will be some exciting experiments to do, and there won’t be anyone around who knows what experiments *are.*”

A number of preeminent physicists share this concern. But most still believe that string theory is the wave of the future. So to speak. “I see all the things that are wrong with the present situation,” says Steven Weinberg, a Nobel-laureate physicist at the University of Texas, “but I still think string theory is the only game in town.”

STRING THEORISTS ARE very excited about Greene’s book, for both selfish and civic-minded reasons. Stoking the public’s romance with science is extremely important to them—particularly after Congress canceled funding for the world’s largest underground supercollider in Waxahachie, Texas, which would have enabled scientists to come as close as they ever have to understanding the Big Bang.

“In the old days,” explains Michio Kaku, a high-energy-particle physicist at CUNY, “when we wanted money, we’d go to Congress and say one word: *Russia.* They’d just open up their checkbooks and say, ‘How much?’ Now, for the first time in our lives, we physicists have to sing for our supper. But most scientists cannot speak the language of the land. They’re bumblers when it comes to the English language.”

A few good books, he thinks, plus a few eloquent popularizers, would go a long way toward putting food on the table. “Just as we’re so close to the finish line,” he sighs, “it’d be a crime if the public turned away from funding basic science.”

Greene couldn’t agree more. He talks about the need for the public to know what scientists are up to; he talks about providing a service to his fellow string theorists, who don’t always have time to explain their exciting progress. But the most compelling explanations he gives for writing *The Elegant Universe* have nothing to do with the obligations he feels toward his profession or other scientists. They’re personal.

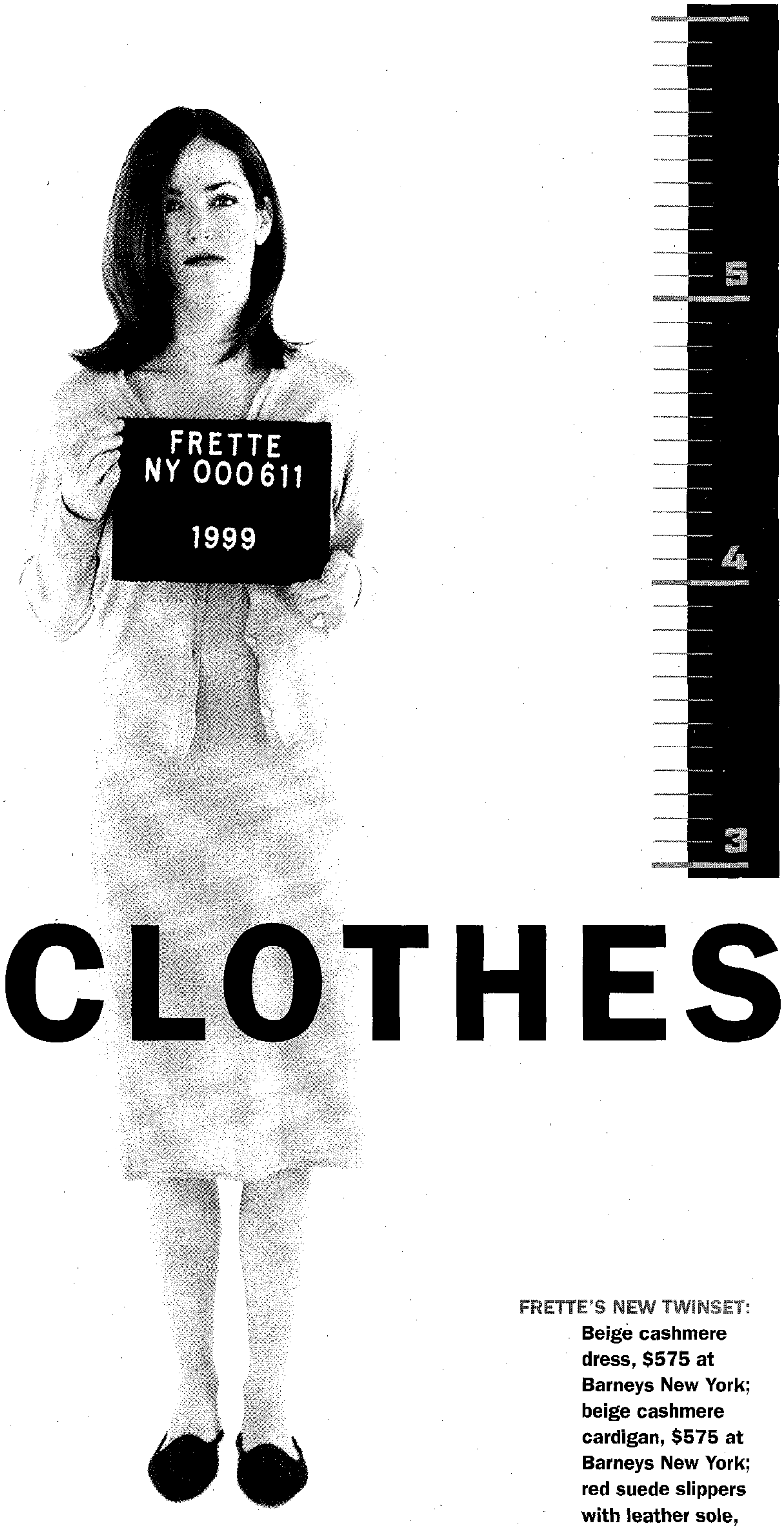
“You know,” he says, “I don’t think physicists will ever give answers to true questions of *meaning.* But I do think that when one understands how the universe works on the deepest possible level, you understand *questions* of meaning with a previously unattainable clarity.”

Greene has no plans to write another book. *The Elegant Universe* took a long time, and he says he’s eager to pour all of his energy back into research. But there’s always the tug of the world on the other side of the ivory tower, that same impulse that lured him out of his classroom four years ago to perform in Pinter’s *Betrayal,* a bit of moonlighting he never told his colleagues or students about. (They would have liked it, too, since in Pinter’s play, which starts with the final scene, time moves backward.) In May, true to form, he’s doing a public lecture at the Guggenheim called “Strings and Strings,” which makes use of an actual string quartet to metaphorically illustrate the principles of string theory.

“Doing only the technical stuff has never seemed to me to be enough,” he admits. “Maybe because the breakthroughs don’t happen sufficiently frequently, or maybe not. But there has always been a part of me that wanted to engage with the world on a different level.” Greene smiles. “I guess,” he says, “I like having a double life.” ▬

Photograph by Silvia Otte.

NYPD Blue's Kim Delaney, America's favorite plainclothes officer, looks suspiciously stylish while rounding up some unusual fashion suspects.



(NOT JUST) PLAINCLOTHES

As Detective Diane Russell on *NYPD Blue*, Kim Delaney has taught us a little something about the sexiness of plain clothes. It's only fitting that she would pop in on a break between tapings to check out some of the best clothes for spring by Frette, malo, hLam, Yeohlee, and dosa. • What are plain clothes? They are the items that get us dressed, day in, year out, regardless of fashion's seasonal fetishes. They have a purity of line and a

FRETTE'S NEW TWINSET: Beige cashmere dress, $575 at Barneys New York; beige cashmere cardigan, $575 at Barneys New York; red suede slippers with leather sole, $196 at Barneys New York, Linda Dresner (484 Park Avenue), Saks Fifth Avenue. Bracelet by Jacqueline Rabun, $195 at Barneys New York.

BY SALLY SINGER | PHOTOGRAPHED BY SEAN SHROFF

simplicity of spirit that make them both fetchingly easy to wear and deceptively architectural.

Take **Frette,** the elite Italian linens house known for its charmingly fusty scallop-edged bedding. This season it debuts a small, insanely chic line of jacquard p.j.'s, cashmere knits, and the odd caftan or two designed by Brigitte Langevin, ex–fashion director of French *Vogue* and ex-editor-in-chief of French *Glamour* (pronounced *glah-moooor*). Langevin understands what women want: ribbed-back knits that lie flat over the bust, drawstring trousers cut straight through the leg, and the sweetest purse-friendly suede slip-ons ever made. Then there's **malo**, long revered for the quality of its wools and silks. Best-dressed types can't get enough of the knitwear company's subtle palette, the narrow precision of its sweater sleeves, and the pure geometries of its necklines. **hLam** (translation: "your dream" in Berber Arabic; pronounced *lahm*) cuts the best Italian and French textiles available into classic pieces with discreet modern touches. **Yeohlee** Teng has, for seventeen years, dressed New York's style intelligentsia in rigorously designed clothes that couple ageless elegance with youthful, minimalist zip. And Christina Kim's **dosa** marries the earthy and romantic in richly hued, multi-textured slip dresses, camp shirts, and drawstring trousers.

Plain clothes travel well, flatter the individual rather than fawn on the Zeitgeist, and dissolve day into night with a change of heel or hairdo. Best of all, they are the soundest sartorial investments, as they don't go out of style. And if you really want to go undercover in the style world, forgo fashion for great clothes: No one will I.D. what you're wearing, but everyone will know you're no flatfoot.

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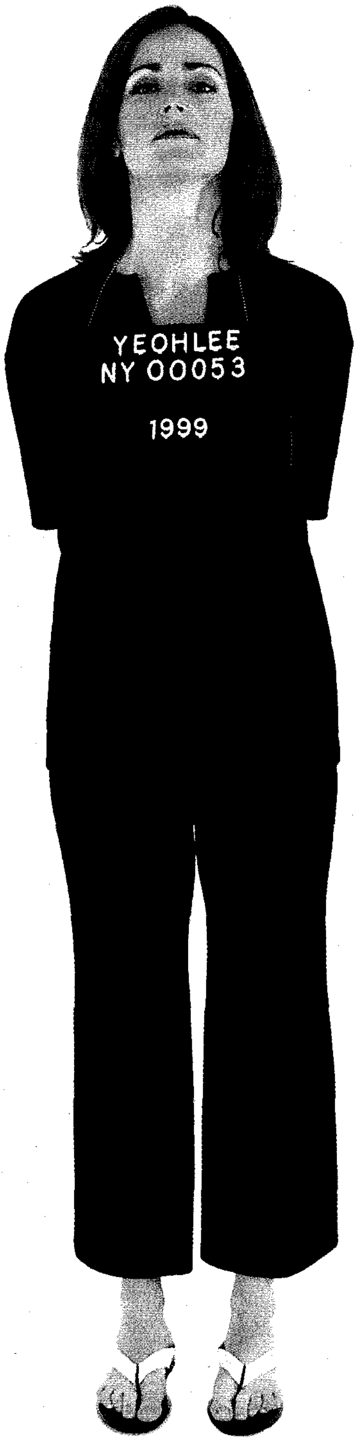
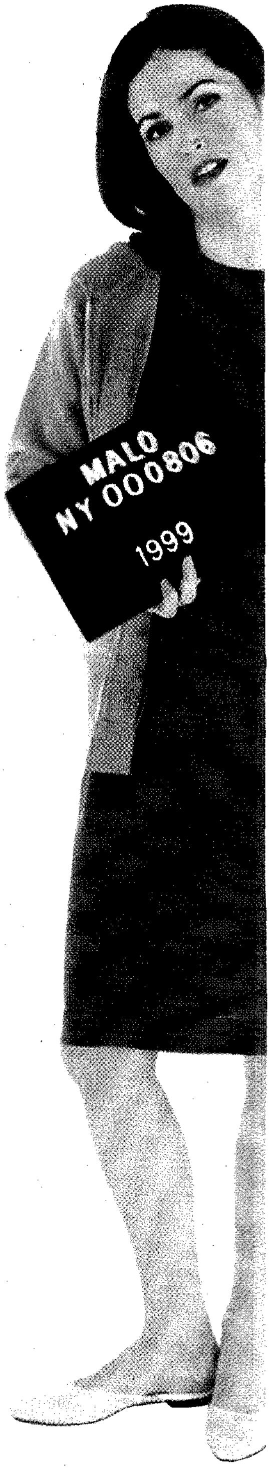


YEOHLEE'S LITTLE BLACK SUIT:
Cotton jersey tee with white dot, $390, and DuPont-Teflon-treated cotton crop bell-bottom pants, $398, at Henri Bendel. Thong sandals, $345 at J.P. Tod's (41 East 57th Street).

2



MALO'S SPORT LUXE:
Hooded zip-front cashmere cardigan, $1,268; cotton-and-Lycra tank top, $202; cotton "Mako" skirt, $393 at Malo (814 Madison, near 68th Street; 125 Wooster Street). Nuda "Taza" mule by Manolo Blahnik, $415 at Manolo Blahnik (31 West 54th Street).

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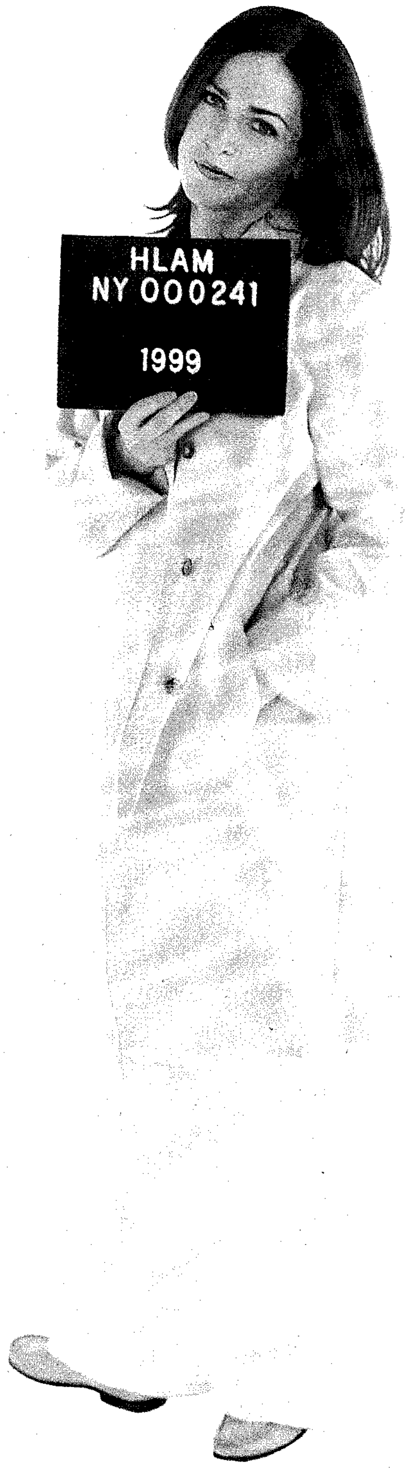

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DOSA
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1999

HLAM'S SPRING WHITES: Cotton raincoat, about $650; cotton sailor pants, about $530; and cotton tank top, about $275, at Bergdorf Goodman, Saks Fifth Avenue, Janet Brown, and Linda Dresner. Flat beige suede mules, $345 at J.P. Tod's.

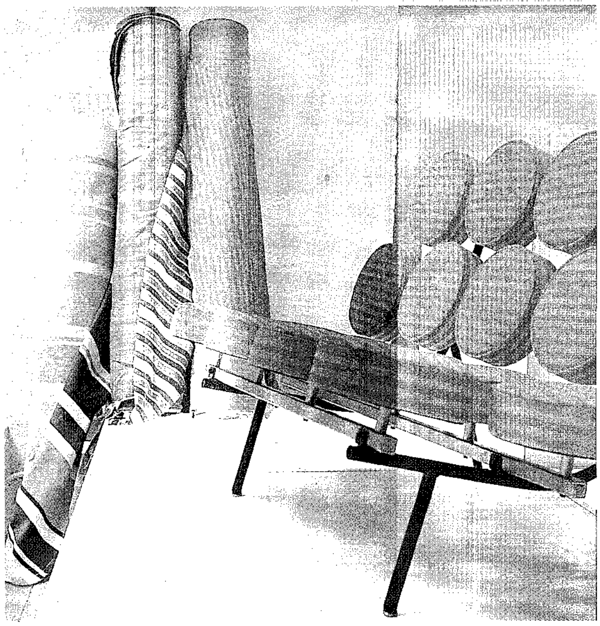
DOSA'S URBAN PEASANT: Chinese silk brocade blouse, $240; iridescent silk camisole, $85; and Cambodian silk ikat sarong skirt, $240, at dosa (107 Thompson Street), Bergdorf Goodman, Linda Dresner, and Calypso St. Barths. Kiwi haircalf "Birkie" mule, $135 at DKNY stores (800-231-0884) and Bloomingdale's.

Hair by Yuki Sharoni; makeup by Stephanie Fowler; styling by David Youkhannah for Cloutier; prop styling by Mary Anderson for Next X.

Dream Weaver

Collectors dream about discovering a cache of treasures long abandoned in some storeroom, but architect (and collector) Steven Learner actually did. In a remote corner of a warehouse in the Midwest, he stumbled upon 84 bolts of Alexander Girard fabric. Many were in their original wrappings, but all were conceived in the fifties and sixties for furniture manufacturer Herman Miller. Girard—an architect as well as furniture, interior, and textile designer—created vivid and innovative fabrics for covering Charles Eames's and George Nelson's radical sofas and chairs. The exuberant colors of his stripes, tweeds, and solids were inspired by his love of all things Mexican (from $50 a yard for solids to $100 a yard for stripes).

FORM AND FUNCTION/*95 Vandam Street/414-1800*



BEST BETS

The best of all possible things to buy, see, and do in the best of all possible cities

BY CORKY POLLAN

Fast, Cheap, and (Nearly) Out of Stock

Tomy's Xiao instant cameras are the Furbys of Japan, selling out as quickly as toy stores get their shipments. But somehow, Steven Alan (whose downtown empire now includes two cool stores bearing his name) has managed to put his hands on a stash of these palm-size wonders. Not really a toy, the Xiao, with its built-in flash, takes twelve clear passport-size pictures that develop in seconds ($85; film cartridge included; additional film, $10).

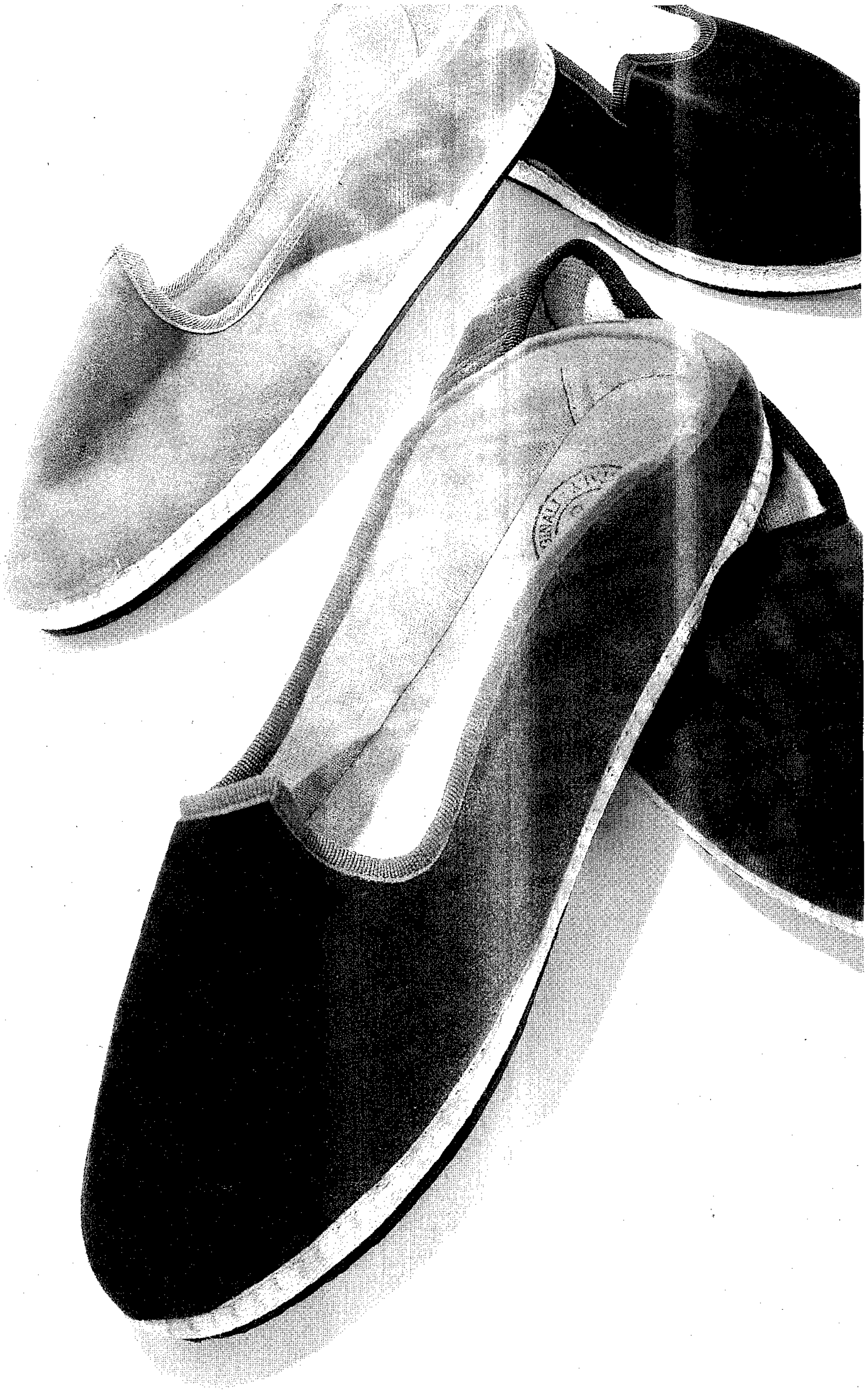
STEVEN ALAN/*60 Wooster Street/334-6354*

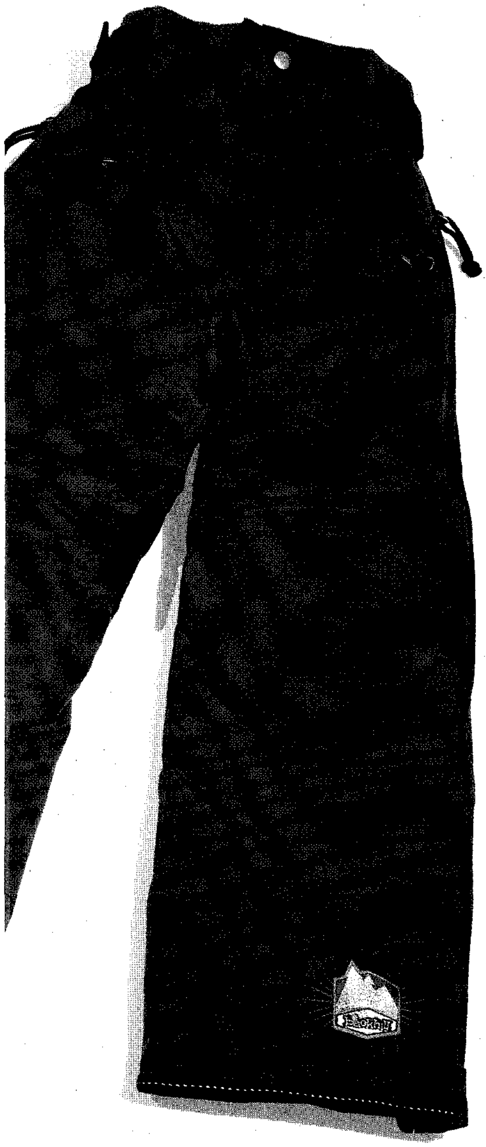
Photographs: clockwise from top right, Steve Wisbauer; Michael Grimm; Steve Wisbauer; Amy Freeth.

Water Dogs

Birkenstocks, t'ai chi ch'uan slippers, Tevas, and nurses' shoes have recently been seen on the pampered feet of the fashion flock. The newest additions to the list of unlikely footwear are Friulanes, the velvet shoes worn by Venetian gondoliers. They're hand-stitched in the Friuli region of Northern Italy (accounting for their name); they have a canvas lining and rubber soles and come in a handsewn rayon tote bag. Though designed for gondolas and the ancient, slippery stone streets of Venice, they'd look rather snappy on any yacht or Caribbean isle ($45).

PASTEC/*459 Broome Street/219-3922*





Get Your Ski Legs

Burton's Treeline snowboard pants are padded just where they should be padded and fully waterproof. High-tech outerwear, they were designed for those who brave extreme weather conditions (which basically means all kids). The pants have a breathable nylon shell with full-side zipper vents for dumping excess heat, removable knee pads, thermal insulation, and adjustable Velcro waist tabs. Best of all, they're just baggy enough to look cool ($119.95; for ages 6 through 14).

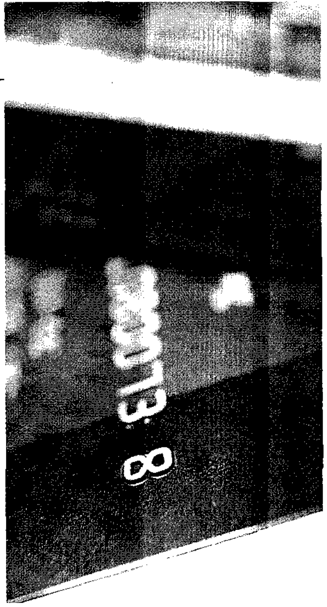
BLADES BOARD & SKATE/*All locations*

PARAGON SPORTING GOODS/*867–871 Broadway, at 18th Street/255-8036*

SMARTCITY

Bank on This

Feel like you're getting nickeled-and-dimed by your bank, especially at the ATM? Maybe you are. Here's how to fight back. **BY MICHAEL STEELE**



WHILE THE COST OF living in this city makes sticking to a budget all but impossible, there was, until recently, at least one way New Yorkers could feign frugality: By keeping a mental list of cash machines to avoid at all costs—the ATMs that levy an extra noncustomer surcharge.

Then, earlier this month, Chase started charging noncustomers who use its ATMs. (Chase customers who maintain a certain minimum balance don't get charged at Chase ATMs, of course.) While it was merely the biggest of a string of banks that had already done this—77 percent of the city's banks now levy such fees, up from 7 percent last year—Chase's move made all the difference. It didn't used to matter who your bank was, so long as you were near a Chase or Citibank (which is expected to join the fee-levying majority soon) when you needed cash. That's often no longer the case, but with a little sleuthing—and a moment's consideration of what, exactly, you're looking for in a bank—you can find a bank that meets your needs and still eliminate (or at least minimize) ATM and other annoying fees.

WHO DOES, WHO DOESN'T

Banks claim that if they didn't levy a surcharge, customers would be subsidizing noncustomers. But that's not exactly true: When a Citibank customer withdraws money from a Fleet ATM, for example, Fleet charges Citibank a fee to cover the cost of its customer's transaction. But it also charges the Citibank customer an extra $1.50. The surcharge is pure profit for Fleet. In his latest book, *Why Not Me?,* Al Franken runs for president on the single-issue platform of ATM fees, and wins. (Bill Bradley might want to mull that one over.)

Fleet, Chase, Dime, Greenpoint, Fourth Federal, Apple, Emigrant, M&T, and Marine Midland all levy surcharges, ranging from $1 to $1.50 per "foreign" ATM visit. For now, Citibank, Republic, Independence, Amalgamated, and Bank of New York do not, but don't expect them to hold out for long. "We're going to wait and see what happens," says Susan Weeks of Citibank. "In other markets we've had problems with capacity." In other words, as Ken Herz of Chase puts it, "If you go to a Citibank ATM you could be waiting in line behind all the other noncustomers drawn to the free ATMs."

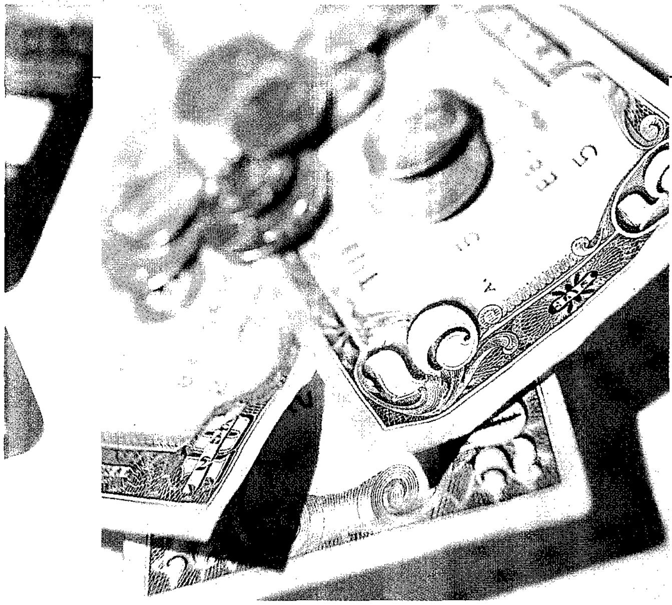
CAN'T BEAT 'EM? JOIN 'EM

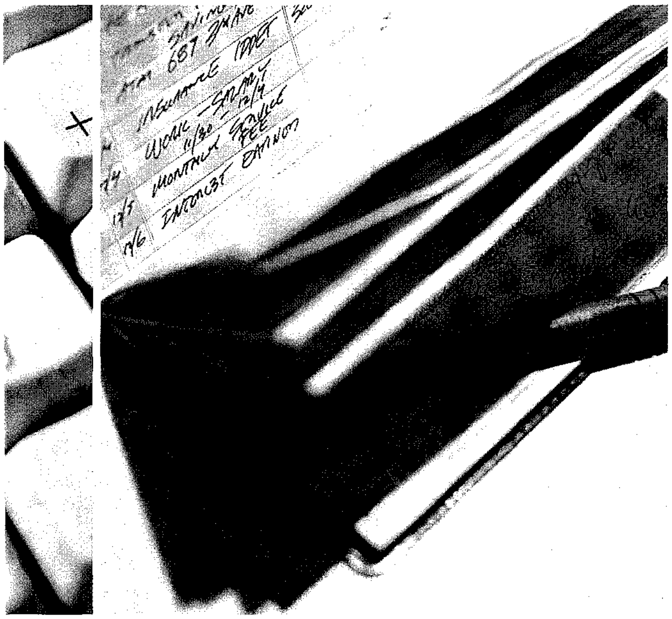
If you're an ATM junkie, dipping into your account more than twice a week, you now basically have no choice but to find a bank with a large stable of machines—in other words, Chase, Citi, or Fleet. In some respects, these megabanks assume that you are willing to pay extra fees and/or maintain higher balance requirements for the convenience of buying insurance, mutual funds, credit cards, and loans at the same place. But even if all you want is a plain old checking account, chances are the megabanks can still save you some money on ATM fees. (Keep in mind that just three "foreign use" surcharges a week can add up to $234 a year.) **Chase** (for locations, call 935-9935) has 69 branches and as many ATM locations in Manhattan, so you'll never need to go near another bank's ATM. At Chase, online banking is free, the ATM cards double as debit cards at any store that accepts MasterCard, and the 24-hour customer-service line actually lets you talk to a human being, even on holidays. To avoid monthly maintenance and transaction fees of any

EXPERT TESTIMONY

Photo Finish

When your old Vivatar point-and-shoot broke, you just threw it out. But now that you've upgraded to an envy-inducing Leica, what do you do if *it* stops working? The photogs we asked, including such notables as Danny Clinch and Michael Lavine (who, individually, have shot for such publications as *Rolling Stone, Esquire,* and this one), pointed to Professional Camera Repair Service (37 West 47th Street; 382-0550). The 53-year-old shop will furnish you with a free written estimate (important, since rates begin at $75 an hour, plus parts), and the shop's very particular fans cite its thoroughness. "We don't want you back," says co-owner Rick Rankin. "Not with the same problem." **SAM GROBART**





sort, you'll need to maintain an average monthly balance of $3,000 in your checking or a combined balance of $4,500 in all your accounts. Citibank has almost as many branches, and with Citi you can get away with a combined minimum balance of $1,500—including even your credit-card debt.

JE REFUSE

If you can live with the inconvenience of a bank that has only three branches—and as many ATM locations—in Manhattan, check out **Fourth Federal Savings** (1355 First Avenue, at East 72nd Street; 1751 Second Avenue, near 91st Street; 242 West 23rd Street; 288-2005). Customers with direct deposit get free checking and free ATM use. (They still get hit with surcharges if they go to a machine that charges them, of course.) Better still, their accounts earn interest whether the balance is $15 or $15,000. It's only 2 percent, but at least it's something. (Others in Fourth Federal's peer group: Amalgamated and Independence Savings.)

THE THIRD WAY

Medium-size banks like **Republic National Bank of New York** (for locations, call 718-488-4050) try to offer the best of both worlds; Republic's big enough to offer extra conveniences that small fry like Fourth Federal can't, but as with the small banks, its fee structure is relatively gentle. It has 26 Manhattan branches, and if you meet its minimum-balance requirement of $1,500 (in all your accounts combined), it won't penalize you for using its ATMs or anyone else's (which still doesn't protect you from those with foreign-use surcharges, of course). It also offers low-rate rebate credit cards (prime plus 2.9 percent). Several of its ATMs, like the one at the World Trade Center, even dispense postage stamps and MetroCards.

LOOK MA, NO TELLER (EVER)

If you're dumping every spare penny into the stock market and don't plan on keeping even $1,500 in checking just to duck the maintenance fees, an account like **Fleet Bank**'s Self-Service Checking might be right for you. Customers who have direct deposit pay $5 a month and get unlimited electronic transactions (telephone, ATM, and online banking). You're allowed some teller-assisted transactions, but if you do something at the window that could have been done electronically, such as deposit a check, you get zapped for $2.

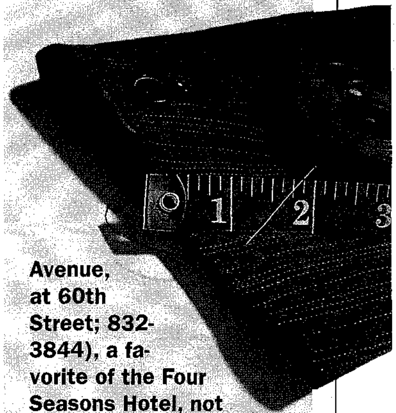
CYBERBANKER

Citibank (call 627-3999 for details) was the first among area banks to develop PC banking, and it's still the best. You don't even have to sign up. Just go to www.citibank.com, and type in your Citicard number and ATM PIN. On its fast, easy-to-navigate site you can review several months' worth of credit-card statements, transfer money between accounts, or pay the mortgage. Bills from utility companies and places like Bloomingdale's can be paid instantaneously, and Citibank will mail a check to unwired merchants, like your parking garage, thereby saving you a stamp. To supplement its online investment service—any number of equity shares can be purchased for $19.95—it provides extensive market news, company profiles, and stock quotes. The best part? It's all free. At least for now. ▬

NAVIGATOR

Q: ***I had to leave my favorite suit at home during a recent business trip because I noticed at the last minute that a seam had come undone. For the next time this happens, can you recommend a tailor who does emergency, last-minute repairs?***

A: **Vince Rao and his crew at The Village Tailor and Cleaners (125 Sullivan Street; 925-9667) understand your pain. The shop picks up and delivers free in the neighborhood (fee negotiable for longer distances) and will drop everything to tackle emergency work stat. Much of the work takes fifteen minutes—plain hems take only five and cost $11.50. Uptown clients may prefer Peppino's (780 Lexington Avenue, at 60th Street; 832-3844), a favorite of the Four Seasons Hotel, not to mention Alec Baldwin and Zsa Zsa (all that celebrity debauchery is tough on seams and hemlines, you know). Joseph "Peppino" Rettura will put two tailors to work on one customer's item if needed—on everything from shortening sleeves ($22.50 and up) to taking in the waist ($13.50). Can't wait around? Peppino delivers.** ELANA ZEIDE



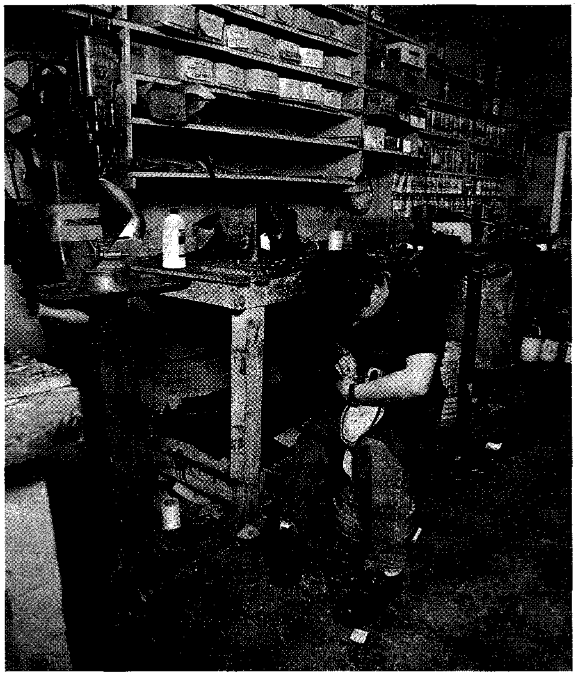
otographs: clockwise from top left, Nicholas Eveleigh (4); Amy Freeth.

SALES & BARGAINS **SHYAMA PATEL**

Peachy Cobblers

Have snow and sleet left **your Blahniks battered?** *Careful craftsmen can render them almost immortal. A visitation with the city's* **saviors of the sole.**

WHEN A FASHION EDITOR cracks a stiletto exiting her Town Car, chances are she'll take it (or even more likely send it by messenger) to **Top Service**. For $21, the shop will repair and resurface the ailing shoe by evening. Shoe fetishists know that quality service can extend the life of those Jimmy Choos, and a good dye job can even help keep your bills down. (Pick up cool shoes on sale in tacky colors, and the shop'll dye them black for $22 a pair.) Top Service's craftsmen will match your pumps to any fabric, and their broad palette makes resurfacing a snap.



It looks down-at-the-heel, but B. Nelson's all about fancy footwork.

Manolo Blahnik, Gucci, and Chanel enlist the fastidious crew at **Shoe Service Plus** for special attention to fancy footwear. Steam cleaning or waterproofing of delicate materials is only $10. Dyeing is $25 (for anything, even patent leather). It's $16 to have slingbacks taken in (and the work's done inside the lining, leaving no mark), $50 to taper a pair of boots, and $8 to $20 to stretch or shrink shoes by up to a size.

For inexpensive old-fashioned men's cobbling, Johnston & Murphy's salespeople like **David's Shoe Repair**, tucked into a back corridor of Grand Central. Men's reheeling and resoling is $37 and takes fifteen minutes. Reheeling alone starts at $8 and takes only five.

Ferragamo and Church's swear by Rockefeller Center's **B. Nelson** for more elaborate men's repairs. (When one dieting customer's feet shrank, the shop resized all his bespoke shoes.) Rebuilding starts at $50, and patching tears or reinforcing a seam can cost as little as $5. The shop prides itself on being able to match almost any color.

Top Service, 845 Seventh Ave., near 54th St. (765-3190); Shoe Service Plus, 15 W. 55th St. (262-4823); David's Shoe Repair, Grand Central Corridor, 45th St. near Vanderbilt Ave. (867-4338); B. Nelson, 1221 Sixth Ave., near 49th St., Level C-2 (869-3552).

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

Picks of the Week

Denise Williamson Showroom's hip designers like Fake London (pictured), Pixie Yates, and Le Havlin Piro usually sell at places like Barneys. At the sample sale, they're 50 to 70 percent cheaper: A Fake London cashmere tank is $120; a Le Havlin Piro stretch shirt is $70. Sizes 2–10. Some men's stuff, too. *115 Mercer St., second floor (226-5507); cash only; Thurs.–Fri. 10–7, Sat. 11–6; 1/28–1/30.*

Riflessi's menswear is always priced below retail. On sale, it's a steal: Suits from Donna Karan Couture, Zegna, and Canali that were $800–$2,150 are now $395–$495; trousers, were $150–$400, now $85; dress shirts are $59 or less. Men's sizes 36S–52L. *260 Madison Ave., near 38th St. (679-4875); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Fri. 9–8, Sat. 10–7, Sun. 11–6; 1/25–2/13.*

Mackie by Bob Mackie is the swank designer's collection of ready-to-wear cocktail suits, coats, and jackets. At the sample sale, you can get the doyenne look for a lot less than usual: Suits and coats that were $300–$650 are now $150–$290. *498 Seventh Ave., at 36th St. (736-0305); A.E., M.C., V.; Wed.–Fri. 10–6; 1/27–1/29.*

Michael's, the Consignment Shop for Brides sells recycled designer gowns at up to 95 percent off. On "bridal bonanza" day, more than 50 dresses are $199. Sizes 4–12. *1041 Madison Ave., near 79th St., second floor (737-7273); cash only; Sun. noon–5; 1/31.* ■

ALWAYS A DEAL

Club-Hopping

AVOID THE MONOTONY OF AN ANnual gym membership and save on monthly fees by signing up for **The American Health and Fitness Alliance**'s cheaper, livelier option. For $65, the Alliance will send you its Fitness Access Pass-Book, which contains 156 passes to hot spots like Crunch, New York Sports, and the World Gym (and more for gyms outside Manhattan). The tickets are valid all year, and will get you into a ton of classes (like spinning, Pilates, even t'ai chi and kickboxing) plus four personal-training sessions. If you end up joining one of the clubs, your $65 will be refunded. *Call 808-0765 to order.*

Photographs: top, Liz Steger; bottom, courtesy of Denise Williamson Showroom.

PETER RAINER

The Grunge Tour

'Another Day in Paradise' is a bloody road flick—'Bonnie and Clyde' for the nineties; hail the perfectly realized working-class hero of 'My Name Is Joe.'

WITH JAMES WOODS, THE NORMAL RULES of overacting don't really apply because he often plays people who already overact in their own lives. The touchstone in his work is hysteria. His characters aren't larger than life, exactly; they're just more high-strung than life. And even though Woods projects a rapacious intelligence—which is why he was perfect for the lizardly wiles of Roy Cohn in the HBO movie *Citizen Cohn*—he's not a cerebral actor. His performances are sparked by flash points of feeling, and they have a present-tense immediacy.

Which is not to say that Woods is exonerated from all charges of overdoing it. Take Larry Clark's **Another Day in Paradise**, for example. As Mel, a journeyman crook in the Midwest looking for one last big score, he acts as if he's barefoot on a griddle. This is appropriate up to a point—it makes sense that this fast-patter junkie sociopath would be a jumping bean of neuroses. But around halfway through the movie, I muttered to myself, *actor's holiday.* It's more of a vacation for Woods than for us. He doesn't just chew the scenery; he practically strip-mines it. The outsizeness of the performance is entertaining but jarring: We're watching a show-off actor giving a show-off portrayal of a show-off character, and that's one too many levels of peacockery.

By contrast, Melanie Griffith, playing Mel's partner Sid, is a marvel of underplaying. Her dozy cuddliness can be a little creepy—infantilized yet carnal—and it works best in counterpoint. It needs the spectral, depraved context provided for her by a Jonathan Demme (*Something Wild*) or a Brian De Palma (*Body Double*). In *Another Day in Paradise,* her snuggly babykins voice goes well with Woods's feral rat-a-tat. Part moll, part den mother, Sid is in the criminal life because it pays off, and because there's sexiness in the danger. This may seem like a romanticized view typical of Clark—who perpetrated the egregious, hipper-than-thou grungefest *Kids* and the seventies photo album *Tulsa,* which canonized Midwest outlaws—but there's a level of truth in it. A crime movie that says crime's a thrill will no doubt be accused of irresponsibility; *Bonnie and Clyde,* an infinitely better movie and a model for this one, drew the same rap. But Clark isn't being irresponsible here. He's just being accurate.

If the film had stuck with Mel and Sid, it might have dipped into the duskier reaches of black comedy—Jiggs and Maggie on dope on the run. But they're only half the story. There's also Bobbie (Vincent Kartheiser), a young delinquent with vacant eyes who robs vending machines and falls under Mel's sleazo tutelage, and Bobbie's girlfriend Rosie (Natasha Gregson Wagner), a fresh-faced junkie. Between bloodbaths, this quartet lives high and lies low. We're meant to see Bobbie and Rosie as new-style babes-in-the-woods—babes gone bad; Mel and Sid, tooling around in their big black El Dorado, are the parents they never had.

Dangerous appeal: Moll-in-training Natasha Gregson Wagner in *Paradise.*

It's all too neat and sentimental. Clark—working from a script by Christopher Landon and Stephen Chin based on a novel by ex-con Eddie Little—tries to introduce a newer, more neurasthenic level of creepiness into this crime world by portraying Mel and Bobbie as essentially conscienceless perpetrators. But he falls back on a plush cushion of pop-psych clichés: He's made a movie about the need to connect. There's lots of dewiness in the acrid air. When Rosie, for example, turns out to be pregnant, she tells Bobbie, "We can be the kind of parents our parents never were." You just know they're headed for a fall, in the same way you know Mel's last big score isn't going to be merry. Clark wants to get points for a higher realism while still attaching himself to the same old corn that was already getting popped

Photograph by Tobin Yelland/Trimark Pictures.

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CUE

What are the new films and where are they playing?
Broadway, Off Broadway, or Off-Off Broadway? Music under the stars or on the stage?
How about a comedy club for a few laughs? Want to be moved by classical art or avant garde art?
How about dinner after the show? Let's take the kids out - where should we go?

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around the time of *Little Caesar.* The final effect is disjointed: We appear to be watching an avant-garde antique.

THE TITLE CHARACTER IN KEN LOACH'S **My Name Is Joe** is a recovering alcoholic who lives on the dole when he isn't sneaking odd jobs or coaching a soccer team of wayward boys from the poorest section of Glasgow. Taut and compactly built, Joe (Peter Mullan) is like an ex-fighter who has sworn off fisticuffs but is always tensed for action. He approaches the world with an exhilarated wariness; the years of booze and bad living are never more than an inch away from his mood.

The film is just fine as long as Loach stays with Joe's personal reclamation project. The tentative relationship that develops between this ardent man and a health counselor (Louise Goodall) drawn to his decency is immensely touching; we can sense that for both of them something very new and yet inexplicably sad is being played out. But Loach doesn't trust the simple back-and-forth expressiveness of these two. Although he's renowned for his social realism, in his own obtrusively unobtrusive way he can be just as meddlesome as the melodramatists. He balls up Joe's story into a running-from-the-local-mob thing, and it's not where we want to be. Plenty of directors can do this stuff better than Loach—when it's worth doing at all. What he *can* do surpassingly well is provide an actor with the oxygen to create a thriving, humane portrayal. (It's a gift he shares with his countryman Mike Leigh.) Peter Mullan gives the kind of performance that keeps expanding before our eyes: He prepares us for everything—Joe's princeliness and lyricism and bullish loyalty. It's a near-great piece of work, and one of the least condescending working-class characterizations I've ever seen.

In brief: Playing by Heart IS ONE OF THOSE tedious multicharacter split-story jobs in which all the seemingly unconnected plot strands are tied up at the end. It's about looking for love in all the wrong/right places, and it features a large and impressive cast doing, for the most part, small and unimpressive things. The writer-director, Willard Carroll, seems to have broken open the story lines for a season's worth of soap operas and then scrambled them. The banalities bubble up at an alarming rate. Among the actors—including Sean Connery, Dennis Quaid, Gena Rowlands, Ellen Burstyn, and Madeleine Stowe—the flippiest is Angelina Jolie, whose smoochy, bee-stung kisser is amusingly florid. So's her performance. ▬

Peter Rainer's 1998–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

THEATER JOHN SIMON

Faux Fosse

'Fosse' is a staggering mess, a clumsy tribute to a brilliant choreographer that falls flat on its face; 'The Captain's Tiger' has no bite.

FOSSE, WITH A CAPITAL *F*, MEANS ONE OF BROADway's supreme choreographers. With a lowercase *f*, it is a castle moat or a long and narrow ditch. The contrivers of the show **Fosse** have usurped that capital *F* for their lowercase venture. This long and narrow spectacle that came to praise Bob Fosse is more likely to bury him. That, of course, is not how the insiders see it but how it strikes my outsider's eyes.

Some reviewers have agonized over how to explain what went wrong. Let me count the ways in which this spectacle, many years in the planning, almost had to miss the mark. Chet Walker conceived it and re-created the choreography; Richard Maltby Jr. (of *Ain't Misbehavin'* fame) is the director; Ann Reinking, one of Fosse's muses, is co-director and co-choreographer. Another muse, Fosse's widow, Gwen Verdon, was artistic adviser. So many cooks can imperil any brew.

(1) It was decided to forgo any biographical, historical, or narrative ordering. (2) There is no thematic sequence either, though that, admittedly, would be hard to come by. (3) There is no context, no explanation. The program does give you some help, but what you read ahead of time doesn't stick while you are watching; what you try to read during the show makes you miss things onstage and disturbs your neighbors.

(4) A more serious problem: Despite Fosse's immense talent, there is not enough variety here. Fosse's signature devices—the prestidigitated-with bowlers, the centripetally turned-in toes and centrifugally splayed hands, the provocatively soliciting posteriors both male and female—sexually revolutionized Broadway dancing but insistently heaped-on, cause monotony. The obvious comparison is with *Jerome Robbins' Broadway,* itself only a moderate success. But, unlike Fosse, Robbins had the benefit of ballet training, doubling his vocabulary.

(5) Robbins had one further advantage: He was alive and in charge. However knowledgeable and dedicated the co-conceivers may be, they are not the man himself. (6) Copying is not the same as creating. Assemble a team of leading contemporary painters well versed in art history, set them to making Vermeers, and the results will be dubious.

(7) Presumably to save money, the original sets and costumes were not re-created. Santo Loquasto has come up with nice substitutes for the real things, but it is too much to expect from one designer to find uncostly equivalents for the work of many major, financially unfettered talents. The unhappy smell of compromise cannot be exorcised.

(8) The cast of *Fosse* is technically accomplished and works as hard as Sisyphus. But I do not discern star quality in anyone; a certain potential, perhaps—the achieved thing, no.

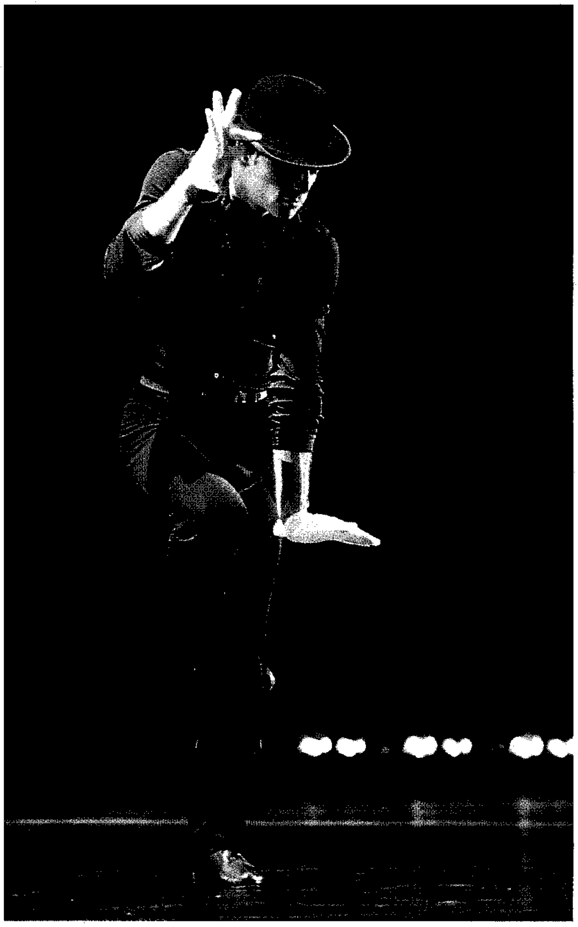
(9) Possibly parts of this show interspersed with the book of a musical and with singing (there is a token amount of the latter here) would be sufficient. Isolated from or partly deprived of these necessaries, the remnant is too much of a muchness. Or littleness.

SO, YOU THINK YOU KNOW WHAT BOREDOM IN THE THEATER is? You once saw two Frank Wildhorn musicals in one day? Well, yes; you do get points for that. You've sat through the entire *Texas Trilogy* in rapid, which is to say slow, sequence? Not bad, but still smallish potatoes. You spent a day at the Chinese opera? I feel for you, but you still have a way to go.

Tell me, however, that you have sat through the intermissionless 100 minutes of Athol Fugard's latest, **The Captain's Tiger**, at the Manhattan Theatre Club, and I'll give you every drop of my sympathy, commiseration, and condolence, plus, if it were mine to give, the Purple Heart. You have drained the bitter cup to the dregs.

The end of apartheid may have brought happiness to multitudes, but for one man it spelled pure disaster. Alas, poor Athol! It took away what

(continued on page 54)



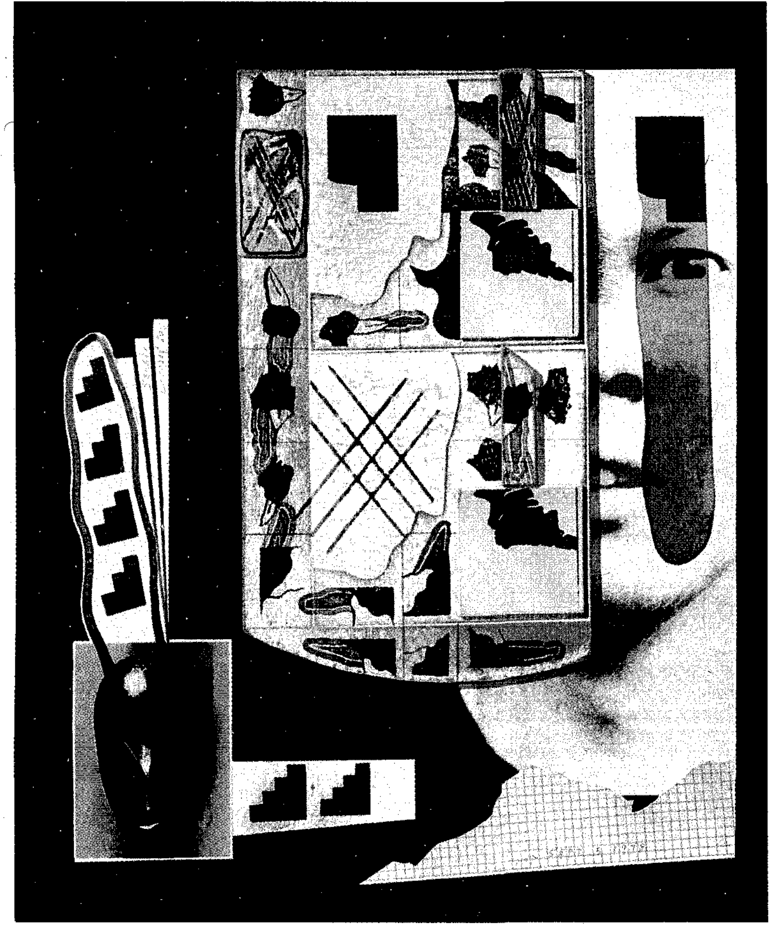
Fosse **pales in comparison with the original.**

Photograph by Catherine Ashmore.

ART MARK STEVENS

Going Postal

At the Whitney, the playful, eccentric Ray Johnson and his art and life of correspondence (in both senses of the word).



***Untitled (Ray Johnson With Duchamp)*, 1974–78.**

WHILE WALKING THROUGH **Ray Johnson: Correspondences** at the Whitney Museum of American Art, I heard a man say with an outsize sneer, "Talk about *minor.*" The judgment was right, the inflection wrong. Johnson (1927–95) was not a man who believed in a world of weights and rulers. He became an artist of consequence precisely because, during a period of overweening scale, he recognized, asserted, insisted upon, and gloried in what many call "the minor." His tossed-off work looked as casual as an errand. It was never meant to awe or impress. It didn't even seem necessary. Yet his oeuvre of "mail art," collages, small curiosities, and doodads—here organized by Donna De Salvo of the Wexner Center for the Arts—developed an unexpected power over the years. Johnson was always entirely himself. An original.

Johnson came of age in the late forties and early fifties, when the major Abstract Expressionists dominated the art world. Like many others in his generation, he did not wish to copy their work and looked instead to the subversive street spirit of Dada and the often comic absurdities of pop for inspiration. His main instrument was collage, in which he juxtaposed words and images taken from the kaleidoscopic culture around him. He would make use of whatever emerged—from high or low culture, from past or present—to clarify his mood of the moment. It could be Elvis, a swan, Duchamp, the Buddha, the Lucky Strike logo. His approach was similar to the present-tense style of the Beats or the wide-eyed poetry of Frank O'Hara. He was funny, too, with a gift for campy satire. If American culture wanted to peek into every important person's closet, well, he would face the facts and make a series called "Everybody's Underwear."

For Johnson, collage represented more than a technique. He turned its principle of the fresh or unexpected "correspondence"—of the union of the torn-apart—into the presiding theme of his life. A man for whom art and life were truly indistinguishable, Johnson made collages not only of images but of actual people, using the Post Office to draw together his wide net of friends and acquaintances into a charmed circle. He spent his days sending people letters and postcards that contained bits of wit, little drawings, and cut-up images; he liked the idea of messages being passed from hand to hand. He placed this activity under the auspices of a *faux* institution called the New York Correspondence School—a name that, among other things, took a comic poke at the grandly named "New York School" of the art-history books. Johnson also loved to found quixotic clubs, creating, for example, the Brown Eyes Club of the New York Correspondence School so that such people wouldn't feel excluded from the Blue Eyes Club.

Obviously, Johnson is a special taste. To respond to his work, you must enjoy his brand of fey, eccentric humor. You must also think there is more to the world than standing back and admiring a grand view: Rummaging about in drawers and reading old letters is also important. (The Whitney show requires much peering at small collections of interesting ephemera.) Most of all, you must take a skeptical view of what contemporary American culture values. Johnson is a radical—of the playful Zen variety—who challenges his culture in a more fundamental way than the conventional shock jocks. He makes a point of creating art that costs nothing. He neither attacks nor celebrates pop culture, preferring to tease, play with, and humanize its enthusiasms. And while his art is self-involved, it is not self-centered. His "correspondences" create an implied community that transcends the endless whine of me-me-me in modern culture. ▬

Mark Stevens's 1997–99 reviews are available on the Web at **newyorkmag.com**.

Photograph courtesy of Richard L. Feigen & Company and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

CLASSICAL MUSIC PETER G. DAVIS

Fascinating Rhythms

Another concert in the unfolding celebration of George Gershwin's music finds parallels in the works of Oscar Levant, Vernon Duke, and Maurice Ravel.

LETTING GO OF THE 1998 GEORGE GERSHWIN centenary is proving to be difficult, if forgivably so. There is still plenty to learn about this most popular of serious American composers, especially the exact nature of the scores he wrote for his many Broadway shows. The **American Composers Orchestra**'s recent tribute, conducted by Dennis Russell Davies in Carnegie Hall, wasn't able to go into that, but the music was choice and the context fascinating. This was not just another run-through of overplayed Gershwin concert classics but an attempt to locate the composer amid the music of three contemporaries who were both associates and admirers: Oscar Levant and Vernon Duke, who, like their mentor, traveled between high- and lowbrow circles with varying degrees of discomfort, and Maurice Ravel, a fastidious classicist whose symbiotic relationship with Gershwin has yet to be properly studied.

The program consisted of four works for piano and orchestra, performed in ascending order of quality: one-movement concertos by Duke and Levant, followed by Gershwin's *Second Rhapsody* and Ravel's *Concerto for the Left Hand.* Both the Duke and Levant scores are little more than curios, but they have much to tell us about Gershwin and his circle in the twenties and thirties. Born Vladimir Dukelsky in 1903 in Russia, where he received early classical training, Duke emigrated to America with his family in 1921 and was given his new name a few years later by Gershwin himself. It was as Vernon Duke that he gained modest fame as a composer of musicals (*Cabin in the Sky*), film scores (*She's Working Her Way Through College*), and such hit songs as "April in Paris" and "Autumn in New York" (Dawn Upshaw has just recorded an entire album of Duke's pop songs for Nonesuch), while his "serious" work more or less languished—the Concerto in C major, written around 1924 at the request of Arthur Rubinstein but never orchestrated, in fact had its world premiere at this concert, in a scoring by Scott Dunn, who also played the solo part.

At first sounding a bit like minor Prokofiev, the concerto loses its self-conscious attitudinizing in a lilting second theme that Gershwin encouraged Duke to play at parties, a clear indication of where this composer's future strengths lay. One would be tempted to say the same of Levant's concerto (played by Alan Feinberg), except that any hint of a tune is quickly smothered in an angry score that seems to pit Schoenberg, who briefly gave Levant composition lessons, against Gershwin, who was the young man's idol before he launched his Hollywood career as an actor and pop-concert pianist. This embattled music paints a frighteningly accurate portrait of Levant as the self-loathing but hilariously witty sidekick that he portrayed in so many film musicals during the fifties.

After these curious works, Gershwin's own *Second Rhapsody*, as played by Leon Bates, sounded like a masterpiece. It is, in fact, perhaps the most sophisticated example among his attempts to fuse classical techniques with the vernacular style in which he communicated with such genius. Duke, Levant, and many other composers, whether they came out of the conservatory or the pop-jazz hurly-burly, took careful note of Gershwin's success in bridging two worlds, and American music was never again the same. It must have been this cross-fertilization that so intrigued Ravel toward the end of his life. Certainly few other composers took what they heard in Gershwin and integrated the essentials into their own style quite as ingeniously as Ravel did in the darkly brooding lyricism of his *Concerto for the Left Hand.* Ursula Oppens's polished pianism captured the glowing essence of the piece perfectly, adding a welcome touch of pure musical elation to a most instructive concert. ■

Left-handed complement: Ursula Oppens, with Dennis Russell Davies at Carnegie Hall.

Peter G. Davis's 1997–99 reviews are available on the Web at **newyorkmag.com**.

Photograph by Steve J. Sherman.

POP MUSIC **ETHAN SMITH**

I'm With the Band

Righteous rocker Ani DiFranco, famous for doing it all herself, puts together her very first group—and creates her best album yet.

On paper, Ani DiFranco is a counterculture superhero. She has a folkie's unjaded commitment to social justice, a punk's DIY ethic, and the incandescent charisma of a born pop star. Since 1990, she has released at least an album a year on her own Righteous Babe Records, toured increasingly large houses to increasingly frantic audiences, and helped set the stage for the Lilith Fair crowd—the generation of guitar-slingers that includes Sarah McLachlan, Jewel, and Alanis Morissette. Through it all, she's been a model of integrity, steadfastly turning down offers from major labels, refusing even to move Righteous Babe from her hometown, Buffalo, and achieving the kind of grassroots success that's been rendered otherwise extinct by MTV-era marketing practices.

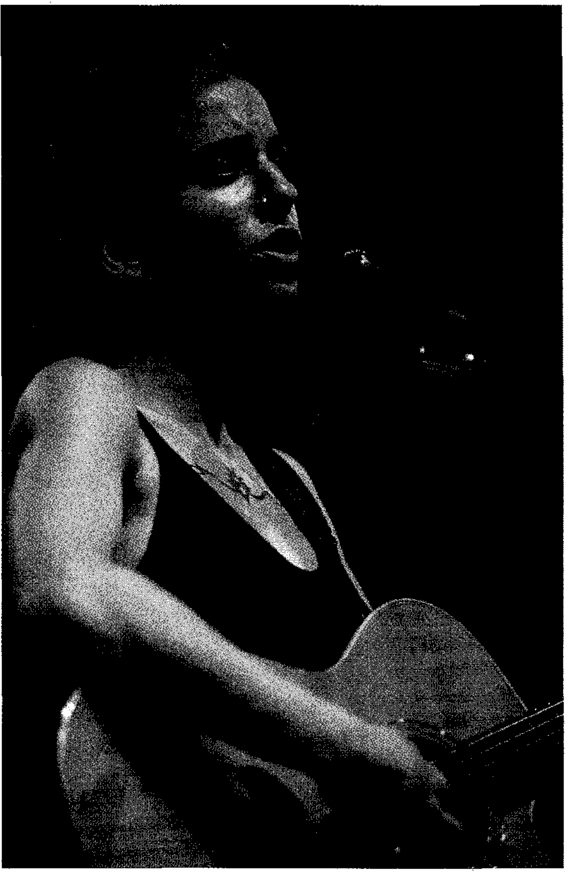
It has always seemed unfortunate, then, that all these admirable qualities and achievements were in the service of music that was often mediocre—either unsettlingly earnest, offputtingly manic, or short on subtle metaphor. But DiFranco's new album, **Up Up Up Up Up Up** *(Righteous Babe Records)* is a big step forward, particularly from her self-obsessed previous album, *Little Plastic Castle*, whose hoary main subject was the difficulty of being famous.

Despite its bubbly title, the new disc is fairly low-key. It's DiFranco's first album to feature a full band, and there's a palpable, if understated, chemistry between the singer and the three other musicians. Julie Wolf's organ, in particular, creates warm atmospherics similar to those that gave Bob Dylan's last album, *Time Out of Mind*, its stirring gravity. (DiFranco recorded much of *Up Up Up* at Daniel Lanois's Kingsway Studios; Lanois produced Dylan's disc two years ago.)

Nobody's going to accuse DiFranco of selling out to the pop machine, of course. Her social conscience is still active: The leadoff track, " 'Tis of Thee," for instance, features nuanced thoughts on nineties law enforcement. But the record's most powerful material is more personal—not the exhibitionistic career dissection of *Castle* but honest, clear-eyed assessments of family relationships, friendship, and sex. "Angry Anymore," which DiFranco sings to a Cajun-flavored banjo-accordion vamp, is straightforward and simple, but not at all simplistic, in its depiction of a woman's maturing attitudes toward her parents. Nearly as impressive is the eight-minute "Come Away From It," which breathes fresh life into that all-too-familiar rock trope—the plea to quit a drug habit. "Do you want to get off? Is this your stop?" DiFranco sings over menacingly spare guitar and organ notes. The song falters only when she asks, "Are you trying to tell me this world / Just isn't beautiful enough?"—as if addiction were an aesthetic choice.

Up Up Up does have its, well, *up* moments, though these tend to be somewhat less satisfying than the innuendo of the quiet numbers. There's nothing inherently wrong with stretching out on a jam, but the last song, "Hat Shaped Hat," does get a little tedious by the time it hits the twelve-minute mark. Live, DiFranco carries off such endeavors with panache—partly because her onstage energy is so infectious, and partly because her between-song patter is so full of genuinely self-deprecating humor ("You think I'm cute?" the diminutive singer once asked a fan who shouted a compliment during a show. "How about *statuesque and muscular*?"). On record, though, there are limits to just how much intraband chemistry a listener really wants to witness.

Up Up Up represents an engaging paradox. Here is a performer who has prided herself on doing things by herself throughout her career—her label's 800 number even spells out ON-HER-OWN. But her best, most personal album yet turns out to be the one on which she's finally recruited an actual band rather than a handful of backing musicians who make occasional appearances. Even superheroes need their superfriends. ■



Personal effects: Ani DiFranco's songs reveal a new introspection.

Photograph by Steve Sands/Outline.

Ethan Smith's 1997–99 reviews are available on the Web at **newyorkmag.com**.

RESTAURANTS HAL RUBENSTEIN

The Tex-Mex-Files

The menu at L-Ray sounds old, but chef Aaron Sanchez has got some new mojo working; at Cafeteria, when it comes to service, some things never change.

Made to border: Located in the space formerly known as Texarkana, L-Ray still has a riverboat feel.

THE FOURTH WEEK IN JANUARY IS upon us, and New York's toniest restaurant owners are cringing, well aware that they're helpless to avoid the annual forehead-buried-in-two-hands disaster due to arrive right on schedule. One might think that after all these years, folks could see the nightmare coming and plan ahead. But no. All you lovely foie-gras-savoring, white-truffle-sniffing people still fail to compute that your Rabelaisian nights are about to stop dead. It doesn't matter what the groundhog sees on February 2. The big chill is inevitable. Because this week, your American Express bills with all those Christmas charges will be stuffed into your mailbox. And high life in New York as we know it will hit the wall like a Miata crash test.

Oh, the agony won't last. Valentine's Day always manages to drag us back into the Neverland of promiscuous credit-card brandishing. But in the meantime, what you gonna do when the sun goes down and you're hungry, dressed in your Barneys-gift-certificate best, and maxed out? Where are you going to find a place hip as a Helmut Lang sheer pink tank top that doesn't let on that it's priced nearer to Liz Claiborne?

Consider **L-Ray** a belated gift of the magi. It's located in the former home of Texarkana, one of those yuppie playgrounds that defined the "Hey there, good times, here I am" frenzy of the early eighties, and owners Fernando Saralegui and Steven Abramowitz have wisely retained the intimate balcony-encircled dining room, though they've spit-polished the marble tile floor, repainted the wainscoting a Mississippi Delta front-porch teal blue, pebbled the glass, and turned down the lighting to late-in-the-day hazy. Consequently, while still retaining the funky grandeur of a riverboat game room, the two-tiered space now evokes enough languid hand-fanning sexiness to house an in-the-round production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.*

Because Texarkana was one of the first boisterous outposts of New American regional cuisine, few frozen-margarita-drenched enthusiasts (they were new back then) ever complained that while the menu was full of funny new words like *mesquite* and *jalapeño,* many of the actual dishes were only slightly more bracing than the ribs Dad basted on the grill with Kraft barbecue sauce. On paper, L-Ray's familiar Tex-Mex menu almost out–déjà vu's Gus Van Sant's *Psycho.* But unlike that bone-dry homage, chef Aaron Sanchez's new take is a vast improvement on the original. Sanchez's mother is Zarela Martinez, the true goddess of Mexican cuisine (her restaurant, Zarela, is at 953 Second Avenue), and while Sanchez doesn't yet have Mom's fiery finesse, his food is happily marked by an energetic but disciplined lust for spices, a congenial harmony in his side dishes, and a penchant for smooth finishes.

Start with an oyster shooter bathed in a sangrita too brackish for any freshman to swig, and knock it back with a warming shot of Herradura Gold. Then you're ready to discover how comforting a duck enchilada, neatly tweaked by toasted pumpkin seeds, can be. A velvety chile relleno finds itself surrounded by a sassy purée of black beans. Mussels are submerged in a bright lime-and-jalapeño broth. Avocado loses its passivity in a lemon-and-garlic vinaigrette. Baked oysters get added body from artichokes and added brawn from spinach and tasso. Peel-and-eat shrimp will set your fingers working like a Belgian lace-maker's. Popcorn shrimp and calamari deserve the adjective; if sold at the cineplex, they'd be devoured before the end of the second trailer. Unfortunately, the San Antonio Airport salad deserves its name, and the char-grilled sausages seem to have missed their flight; they just lie there waiting to be rescued. The baby-back pork ribs, however, need never worry about abandonment.

I know it sounds cute, especially to those of you who miss Cottonwood Cafe, but frankly, chicken-fried steak only tastes right when it costs less than $10. If you want your money's worth, you're much better off with a lean pork chop basted in a deep, hearty mojo, panfried

Photograph by Steven Freeman.

grouper in a bright, eye-widening green-chili sauce, or a superbly golden, blistered-garlic baked chicken. Few Frenchmen would recognize their beloved hanger steak enshrouded and enlivened by jalapeño mojo. All the unadorned grilled fish on the menu are perfectly adequate, but they can't match Sanchez's snapper Veracruz, blasted as it is with chilis and lime. The coconut-seafood stew is more varied and satisfying than the unexpectedly pallid gumbo, which desperately needs more fiyo on the bayou. And for those who never got beyond those shooters, at least fill your tummy with something substantial like a pressed "Cuban Ruban." It's a hoot and goes great with tequila.

Naturally, and unfortunately, Mexican desserts generally fly a few clouds below heaven. No exception here. The pecan pie, the rum pudding, and the brownie are all even sweeter than the staff, and that about out-puckers eating a handful of Cap'n Crunch dry. Luckily, your bill will be a lot easier to swallow. That's not to reserve L-Ray solely for those days when your broker has once again suckered you into yet another designer IPO. Rather, how nice to enter somewhere that really buzzes while still being able to leave without feeling electrocuted. L-Ray may not be all things to all diners, but there are times when it's everywhere you want to be.

L-Ray, 64 West 10th Street (505-7777). Dinner, daily 6 P.M. to midnight; brunch, Saturdays and Sundays 11:30 A.M. to 3 P.M. All major credit cards.

ONE OF THE BEST PIECES OF ADVICE EVER given to a restaurant staff was delivered by Keith McNally during the furious, every-night's-a-party-where-the-fun-never-ends first year of Cafe Luxembourg. "I love you all, really," he said. "But you are not fabulous. It is your job to make *them* feel fabulous." Well-connected restaurants like **Cafeteria** should have this adage embroidered on their staff's shirt collars.

Last summer, when the geometrically striking luxe coffee shop first took off like the opening of a Prada Sport store, it was understandable that the hosts often appeared stunned and haunted every time the front door opened and another horde of the all-too-knowing were suddenly pinned against the reservations desk. Not surprisingly, confusion was as rampant as white vinyl. Your waiter would appear only on the quarter-hour. Three people would take your drink order; none would arrive. Apologies were heard more often than specials. And though some of the kitchen's updated versions of classic American cookery worked really well, most felt like somebody had left out one step. It would have been easier to find someone who had actually found *Armageddon* moving than to get a check. Still, there was something undeniably kinetic about it: the unforced menu, the exuberant crowd . . . you got up to leave, thinking, *Okay, I'll give it another shot.* And then nobody bothered to say good-bye.

Time does heal some wounds, and Cafeteria, looking a trifle weathered by success, has finally found its rhythm. At night, it glows most seductively, and both the horn-rimmed gentleman and the bright-eyed blonde lady at the front desk now command an attractive crew who move more assuredly through the tight quarters and have learned to handle the finicky but happy (and increasingly local) Chelsea throng with clipped aplomb. But the biggest improvement is in the eats. Breakfast is pretty damned good all round, especially the croissant French toast and the salmon-and-potato hash. At lunch, there's a fine turkey burger, a regular burger, a two-fisted tuna club, crackling calamari with revitalized tomato-ginger chutney, and fragrant herbed garlic broth to coat the Prince Edward Island mussels. Then, at night, nix the chicken paillard and tuna tartare, but fried chicken is giggly finger food, seared tuna is thick and lean, both chicken pot pie and meat loaf are uncommonly close to a home-cooked meal, and the hearty smoked pork chop, which now comes with sweet potatoes and roasted apple sauce, was better with the potato pancakes that used to accompany it. As for the desserts, yay for the deep-dish apple pie, the cappuccino-chocolate pudding, and milk shakes that are almost at corner-malt-shoppe-level thickness.

These changes are really kinda fabulous, no? But funny how easily they can be overlooked when someone's not making *me* feel kinda fabulous. Like the waiter who won't look anyone in the eye, or the other two "working" the bar. No one, however, can touch the dark, slim maître d' with the Black Watch–plaid jacket who seats three sets of women without ever pulling out a table, tosses every menu down as if it were an invitation to yesterday's club nite, tells a first-to-arrive diner entering the half-empty room that it's best (for whom?) if he waits at the bar, and routinely stands behind the front desk with his back to the door, incessantly flailing while whispering into the phone. Big surprise: He never says good-bye. Well, I'll tell ya, bud, until you find yourself a prince who will take you away from all this, it's not about you. So pick up those dirty dishes and smile.

Cafeteria, 119 Seventh Avenue, at 17th Street (414-1717). Open 24 hours a day, seven days a a week. A.E., M.C., V.

Hal Rubenstein's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Simon *continued from page 49*

was his one subject—a mighty one, to be sure, from which he wrested endless, often successful, variations. But apartheid apart, the man is reduced to purveying ditch water. Already his previous effort seen at MTC, *Valley Song,* was a desperate haul to bring back at least the phantom of apartheid, to give a paltry opuscule something to say. With *The Captain's Tiger,* he has only his self-indulgence to rely on, and, infinite as that is, it isn't enough.

One wonders why Fugard chose the theater as the medium for this memoir of his youth, which would have done better as a novella. That's what it still is, narrated for at least four fifths of the text by himself. True, there is the occasional interruption from Betty, as he calls his mother, to write about whom in relative peace he hired out at age 20 as captain's tiger (i.e., factotum) on a tramp steamer sailing from Africa to Japan. As the pages of the book grew, it became subject to the comments of its sole auditor aboard the S.S. *Graigaur,* Donkeyman (i.e., stoker, the play's third character), whose English was rudimentary. Mother, as such, isn't in the play; only old Fugard's memory of how young Athol fantasized her—a ghost of a ghost, as it were.

Except for a few scattered crates and a blue-green backdrop, there is no set. Except for two dresses and a nightgown for Betty, there are no costumes. And except for 100 minutes of trivial and pointless palaver, there is no play. There are not even, as we seemed to be promised, tigers or donkeys. Donkeyman is a curious contraption: Sometimes he speaks no English save a pitiful pidgin interlarded with Swahili (rather more than we can handle); at others, his English is suddenly good. (Similarly, the author's Swahili fluctuates up and down.) The dialogue goes, "Paka duna." "Paka duna yourself." The word for the sex act (hard to make out) is either *jig-jig* or *jiggy-jiggy,* and we get plenty of it—the word, that is.

To stir us out of our lethargy, there is the occasional putative shock effect, as in the proposal to go ashore in Colombo for "hot fish curry and a good fuck." Fugard the director tries to compensate for Fugard the writer by goosing his cast into jigging (the usual sense) and bopping. All honor to Tony Todd as Donkeyman for relative underplaying. Felicity Jones has duly learned the right accent but, no doubt under heavy prodding, overacts relentlessly. Fugard the actor is determined to turn his country singlehandedly into a chief exporter of ham. He reads every line as if it had been given to him on Mt. Sinai by a burning bush, and capers about like an old satyr refusing to face that his nymph-chasing days are over.

John Simon's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Cue

A Weekly Guide to Entertainment and the Arts in New York

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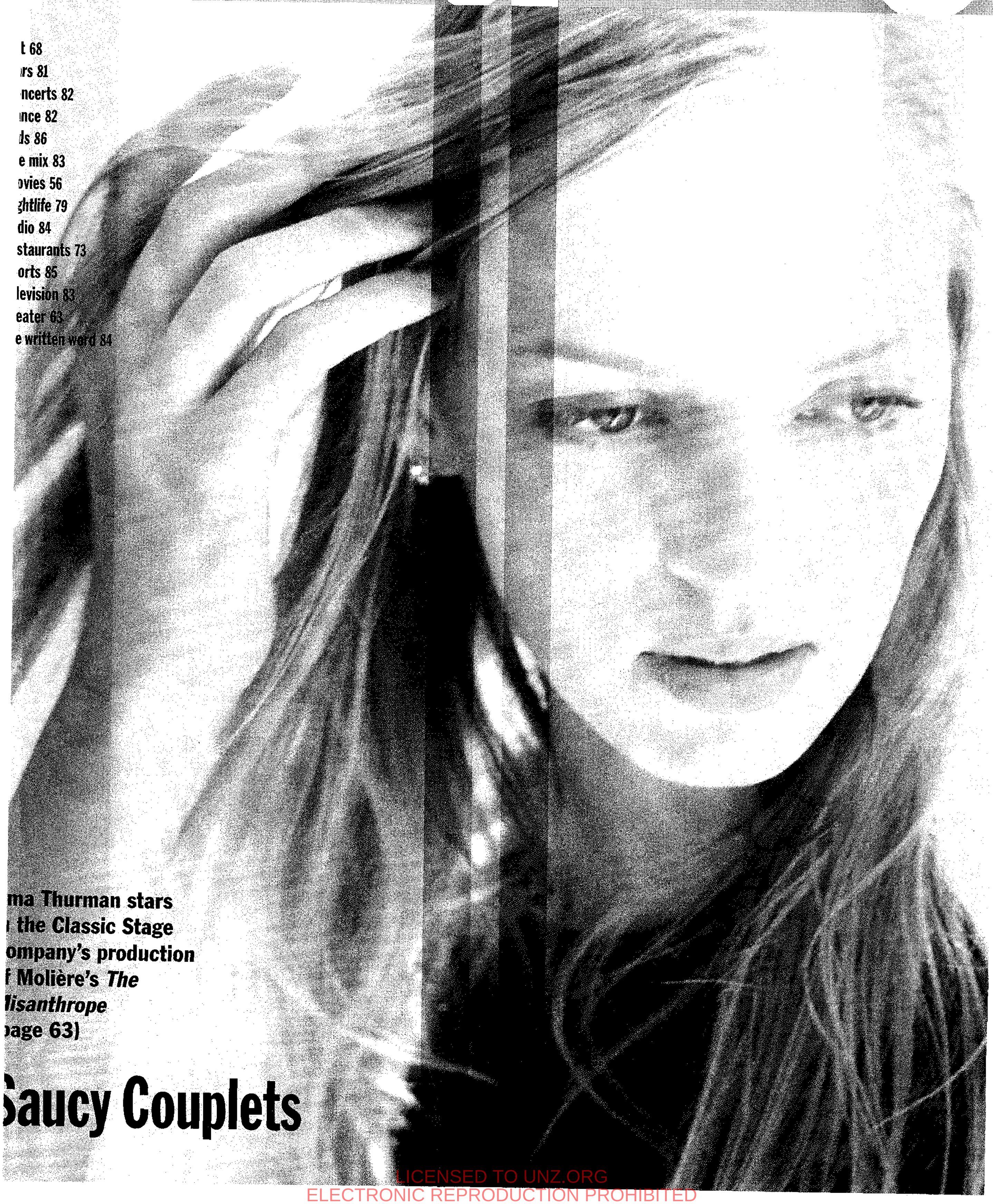

ma Thurman stars
the Classic Stage
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f Molière's *The*
Misanthrope
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Saucy Couplets

movies

Matthew Lillard...Cuban Film...*The Jew in the Lotus*

New Films

★Affliction—Writer-director Paul Schrader's adaptation of the 1989 Russell Banks novel is a heavy dose of oppressiveness. Small-town New Hampshire looks like hell frozen over. It's a cast meat-locker of a locale, except the dead meat is walking around instead of hung up on hooks. Barreling his way through this frostbitten inferno, Wade Whitehouse (Nick Nolte) is the archetypal walking wounded. He may try to wriggle out of his fate but it's bigger than he is. He's a good man gnarled by primal circumstance. The world of this movie is framed as a battlefield of male privilege, and even if you reject the hallucinatory machismo at its core, it holds you. There's excellent supporting work by Sissy Spacek, Willem Dafoe, Mary Beth Hurt, and James Coburn. Nolte is near the top of his form. The character he plays is afflicted all right—beyond reckoning. The movie is his dirge. (Rainer; 1/11/99) (1 hr. 54 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; New York Twin; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

American History X—Edward Norton is a neo-Nazi skinhead named Derek. The film's point is that this monster wasn't born that way: His firefighter father taught him to be racist. His younger brother, Danny (Edward Furlong), is also brought into the fold. Derek ends up jailed for three years for killing two black kids, but his prison experiences transform him. Realizing that his Aryan brothers in the clink aren't exactly soul mates—they gang-rape him in the shower for being friendly around a black inmate (Guy Torry, in a superb cameo)—he emerges clear-eyed and with a full head of hair, yet. The message seems to be: If you gang-rape a skinhead, he'll come to his senses. (Rainer; 11/9/98) (1 hr. 58 mins.; R) *Village East.*

Another Day in Paradise—See Rainer, page 47. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center.*

At First Sight—Mira Sorvino is an architect who falls in love with her blind masseur (Val Kilmer) and persuades him to undergo experimental surgery to gain sight. Directed by Irwin Winkler. (2 hrs. 8 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea West; Murray Hill Cinemas; Coronet; Criterion Center; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Kingsway; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Ridgewood; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Cinema City; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

★A Bug's Life—Disney's new computer-animated film is an iridescent marvel. It's also buggy with tie-ins, but that should not get in the way of our enjoyment of this wiseacre Aesop's fable. The ants on Ant Island have been terrorized by grasshoppers into harvesting food each fall as ritual offerings. When one of the ants, the perky Flik, accidentally spills the grasshoppers' bounty, the colony is endangered. Exiled, he seeks help from the bugs in a traveling flea circus. Co-directors John Lasseter and Andrew Stanton position these bugs in ways that make witty use of the wide-screen frame. One reason the bugs come across so well here is that the sheen of the wings and exoskeletons, and the segmented way in which these critters move, are tailor-made for the technical requirements of computer animation. But there's another explanation for why bugs are naturals in this family-entertainment universe: They bring out the kid in everybody. (Rainer; 12/7/98) (1 hr. 34 mins.; G) *Village East; Sutton; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; The Movies at Staten Island.*

The Celebration—A family reunites for its patriarch's 60th-birthday party and certain horrible secrets spill out over dinner. Directed by Thomas Vinterberg. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *The Screening Room; 62nd and Broadway.*

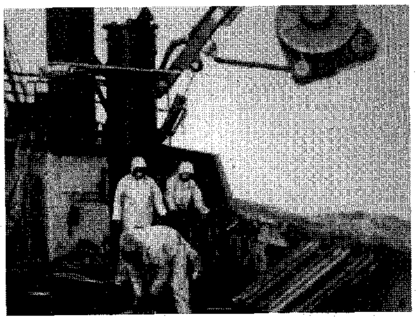
★Central Station—I can't join in with the prevailing opinion that Walter Salles's *Central Station* is on par with early De Sica—I love early De Sica too much. But in this otherwise rather schematic swatch of social catharsis, Brazil's Fernanda Montenegro gives the best performance by an actress I've seen all year. De Sica might not have made this movie, but he would have recognized in her bitter, beseeching portrayal a kindred character. (Rainer; 12/14/98) (1 hr. 55 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

Children of Heaven—A young boy loses his sister's only pair of shoes and tries to get them back without letting his parents know they are missing. Written and directed by Majid Majidi. (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

A Civil Action—Jonathan Harr's nonfiction best-seller is being used as a textbook in law schools, but the movie that has been made from it is unlikely to be a model in film schools. Written and directed by Steve Zaillian, it has more negative virtues than positive. It's commendable for not doing many of the things we expect from legal thrillers in this Grisham era, but we're left with a long trudge through the ambiguities of civic virtue. John Travolta, not at his best, plays the personal-injury attorney who starts out as a high-gloss ambulance chaser and ends up obsessed with the moral rightness of his wrongful-death suit even as it drags down the resources of his firm; Robert Duvall, in an expertly malicious performance, plays his legal adversary. He says stuff like "The courtroom is not a place to look for truth." No kidding. (Rainer; 1/11/99) (2 hrs.; PG-13) *Village East; 19th Street East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Guild 50th Street; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Kingsway; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion Theatre; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Crossbay; Fresh Meadows; Main Street Cinemas; Hylan Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Down in the Delta—A Chicago grandmother moves her daughter and grandchildren back to Mississippi in hopes of pulling them away from the problems of the city. With Alfre Woodard, Al Freeman Jr., Esther Rolle, Mary Alice, Loretta Devine, Wesley Snipes, Mpho Koaho, and Kulani Hassen. Directed by Maya Angelou. (1 hr. 50 mins.; PG-13) *Bay Plaza; BAM Rose Cinemas; Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

★Dr. Akagi—Set in the waning days of World War II, this is a graceful black comedy about a physician (Akira Emoto) nicknamed "Dr. Liver" for his obsession with eradicating hepatitis. Director Shohei



Documentary
Fish Story

One of the westernmost towns in North America is the subject of 'Dutch Harbor: Where the Sea Breaks Its Back,' a fascinating, if bleak, look at the tiny metropolis of the Aleutian Islands, where crabbing was once king. These days, the formerly wild and woolly town—whose bar brawls were once of mythic proportions—has been tamed by a supermarket, a Burger King, and a coffee bar. The black-and-white film, with eerie Super-8 footage of time at sea (above) and a groovy soundtrack of music by groups like Tortoise and Palace, shows February 1 at Tonic. See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.

'CUE' COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SOUTHAM/CPI.

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AMPAS: your card will admit you and a guest to any performance.

Imamura has created an oddball hero—a fanatic Albert Schweitzer loyal to Hirohito and passionate about bacteria. When Akagi sees the A-bomb cloud lift in the far horizon, his first thought is that it resembles a hypertrophied liver. He's right, of course. (Rainer; 1/25/99) (2 hrs. 8 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Elizabeth—This film, about the daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, has real verve. It's not all that great even so, but in the historical-bio genre, liveliness counts for a lot. Cate Blanchett plays the young Elizabeth from the time she is nearly rendered headless by her half-sister Queen Mary (Kathy Burke) to her final ascension as the Virgin Queen. We are not to take that moniker literally. The Elizabeth on view here is a frolicker who knows how to dangle her spinsterhood before her panting suitors. She's a sexy queen, especially when she realizes she needs to ensure her power by lopping off a few heads of her own. The Indian director Shekhar Kapur and his screenwriter, Michael Hirst, would like us to see her as a feminist icon: She could do it all—dance the volta with her lover Robert Dudley (Joseph Fiennes) in full scandalous view of her court and lord it over the old fuds in Parliament. "I am no man's Elizabeth," she cries out while still in her marriageable mode. Later, she amends that: "I am married to England." Lucky England. (Rainer; 11/16/98) (2 hrs. 4 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; Waverly; Chelsea West; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Regency.*

Enemy of the State—This film is set against the backdrop of top-secret government surveillance, and I suppose it's all meant to be Kafkaesque. But since this is a Jerry Bruckheimer production, it's more like Kafka on steroids. Gene Hackman (ostensibly Will Smith's co-star) doesn't even make it onto the wall until an hour into the show. He plays a kind of defrocked former CIA agent named Brill who knows all sorts of clever secret-agent-type things. Brill reluctantly surfaces to offer his aid when a Washington lawyer, Robert Clayton Dean (Smith), is targeted by rogue National Security Agency operatives under the command of Thomas Brian Reynolds (Jon Voight). Reynolds has already engineered the garroting of a senator (an unbilled Jason Robards) opposed to an over-the-top domestic snoop-and-spy bill. By accident, Dean finds himself in possession of a videotape of the murder, and runs for his life. If you're going to make a movie about how easy it is for our identities to be electronically stolen by the government, shouldn't you at least create people with identities worth stealing? The only character in the movie with any resonance is Brill, and that's largely because Hackman is playing him like a follow-up to his Harry Caul, the professional surveillance expert in *The Conversation.* (Rainer; 11/30/98) (2 hrs. 7 mins.; R) *Chelsea; Criterion Center; Sutton; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

Everest: The Movie—The first-ever IMAX footage from Everest documents the 1996 summit climb of an international expedition. Directed by David Breashears and Ed Viesturs. (45 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Square.*

The Faculty—High-school students realize their teachers are from another planet. With Elijah Wood, Bebe Neuwirth, Salma Hayek, and Jon Stewart. Written by Kevin Williamson. Directed by Robert Rodriguez. (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) *Chelsea; State; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kings Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Astoria; Crossbay II; The Movies at Staten Island.*

★**The General**—Few movie characters are as rollickingly, disturbingly complex as Martin Cahill, the real-life Irish gangster in John Boorman's mesmerizing new movie. As Cahill, Brendan Gleeson doesn't try to soften him for us or explain him away. He keeps us perplexed right up until the end about this fanatically anti-authoritarian crook, who despised equally the Church, the state, the IRA, the police. It's a great performance. The film has the structure of an American gangster classic and yet it doesn't remind you of anything else—even other Boorman films. (Rainer; 1/4/99) (2 hrs. 5 mins.; NR) *Village East; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Documentary

Delhi, Dalai, Deli

In 'The Jew in the Lotus,' writer-professor Rodger Kamenetz revisits India, the place of his spiritual reawakening, and explains how meeting the Dalai Lama helped him lose his cynicism and find his way back to Judaism. The film—inspired by the 1994 best-seller of the same name—opens January 29 at Cinema Village.

Gloria—Sharon Stone becomes the caretaker of a young boy who teaches her a lesson about love. With Jeremy Northam, Cathy Moriarty, and George C. Scott. Directed by Sidney Lumet. (1 hr. 48 mins.; R) *19th Street East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Alpine; Kings Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Centre Sunnyside; Cinema City; Jackson Triplex.*

Gods and Monsters—The story of aging director James Whale (Ian McKellen) and his relationship with his lawn-boy, played by Brendan Fraser. With Lynn Redgrave. Written and directed by Bill Condon. Based on the novel *Father of Frankenstein.* (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; 59th Street East; Gemini.*

Happiness—This scandalous American independent film, written and directed by Todd Solondz, is, of course, about misery. The characters try to make connections and wind up nowhere; they love the wrong person, the forbidden person; they degrade themselves, destroy other people. Each scene offers one or another aspect of the alleged anxiety and terror lurking beneath the respectable surface of middle-class life. A retired couple in their sixties (Ben Gazzara and Louise Lasser) have nothing left to say to one another. One of their daughters, Joy (Jane Adams), a scared, talentless girl, can't hold a job or a man. Her older sibling Helen, the slinky writer, is a parody of chic, attitudinizing success, a suburban Kathryn Harrison. The other sister, Trish, played by the gurgling Cynthia Stevenson, lives happily as an apple-pie-fascist mom, married to what seems to be a solid husband and dad—Bill (Dylan Baker). Bill lusts after little boys, perhaps even after his own little boy. Aren't the American suburbs a fairly easy target by now? Solondz subverts what has already been subverted. *Happiness* is a brilliant, disturbing, but unstable and half-crazy piece of work. (Denby; 10/19/98) (2 hrs. 17 mins.; NR) *Village East; Crown Gotham.*

Hilary & Jackie—Emily Watson is the celebrated British cellist Jacqueline du Pré, who developed multiple sclerosis at 28. With Rachel Griffiths as her sister Hilary. Based on the book by Hilary and Piers du Pré, *A Genius in the Family.* Directed by Anand Tucker. (2 hrs.; R) *Coronet; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas; Cinemart.*

Hurly Burly—There's a whole lot of overacting going on in this David Rabe–adapted movie of his 1984 play, directed by Anthony Drazan. The cast, playing a mixed-nuts assortment of Hollywood trash, is impressive: Sean Penn, Kevin Spacey, Robin Wright Penn, Anna Paquin, Garry Schandling, Chazz Palminteri, Meg Ryan. But Rabe wants to turn the sex-swapping, coke-snorting L.A. eighties scene into a template for how spiritually bereft we all are, and it doesn't wash. The sleazoids in this movie don't stand for anything—not even themselves. They should call the film *A Bug's Life.* (Rainer; 1/18/99) (2 hrs. 2 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Chelsea; Lincoln Square; Pavilion Theatre.*

In Dreams—What in the blazes happens to Neil Jordan when he makes movies in this country? You can just about bet the farm on the likelihood that his British- and Irish-made films will be wonderful and his American films will be bad. He's followed *The Butcher Boy,* one of the finest films of 1998, with this dollop of supernatural claptrap starring Annette Bening as a children's-book illustrator whose dreams are being commandeered Vulcan-mind-meld-style by a creepo killer (Robert Downey Jr.). By making it clear from the beginning that Bening is dreaming the killer's actual upcoming murders rather than just going bonkers, Jordan discounts any psychological explanation for her unraveling—which under the circumstances would have been more interesting. The pulp awfulness of this movie works upon your sensibilities like battery acid. (Rainer; 1/25/99) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; State; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Kings Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion Theatre; Ridgewood; Cinema City; Cinemart; Crossbay; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; The Movies at Staten Island.*

The Jew in the Lotus—A man travels to India to regain his faith in Judaism. Directed by Laurel Chiten. (1 hr.; NR) *Opens January 29 at Cinema Village 12th St.*

Life Is Beautiful—An Italian Jew and his son are taken to a concentration camp at the end of World War II, and the father attempts to hide the horror through fun and games. Starring Roberto Benigni, Sergio Bustric, Nicoletta Braschi, and Giorgio Cantarini. In Italian, with subtitles. (1 hr. 54 mins.; PG-13) *Angelika Film Center; Paris Theatre.*

Little Voice—A young girl who barely speaks but who can belt out impersonations of singing stars is persuaded to give a concert. Based on the play by Jim Cartwright. Starring Jane Horrocks, Brenda Blethyn, Michael Caine, and Ewan McGregor. Directed by Mark Herman. (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) *Beekman.*

★***Living Out Loud***—Two lonely people—Holly Hunter's Judith and Danny DeVito's Pat—find each other and feel less alone. Writer-director Richard LaGravanese keeps things open and a little messy, just like life. At the beginning, Judith finds herself suddenly single after years as the wife of a prominent cardiologist (Martin Donovan) who has dropped her for a younger woman. Pat is the doorman in Judith's co-op. He's been turned out by his wife after 25 years. They get friendly, but because their emotions are so upfront, we never think of their involvement in class terms. Standard movie romances are fond of bringing mismatches together; writer-director LaGravanese shows us why they might be kept apart. Judith and Pat are made for each other, but they may not be right for each other, and therein lies the rub of this rueful duet. (Rainer; 11/9/98) (1 hr. 42 mins.; R) *Eastside Playhouse.*

Mighty Joe Young—When an African gorilla is moved to a Los Angeles animal conservancy for safety, his life is endangered. With Charlize Theron and Bill Paxton. Directed by Ron Underwood. (About 2 hrs.; PG-13) *Criterion Center; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Marboro; Ridgewood; Cinemart; Crossbay II; Movieworld; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Mississippi Mermaid—François Truffaut's 1969 film of a lonely tobacco planter who orders a bride through the mail. Starring Catherine Deneuve and Jean-Paul Belmondo. (2 hrs. 3 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

My Name Is Joe—See Rainer, page 48. (1 hr. 32 mins.; R) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

Olympic Glory—The IMAX movie about the athletic triumphs of the 1996 Nagano Olympics. Narrated by Stacy Keach. (40 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Square.*

Patch Adams—Robin Williams plays a smiling-through-tears doctor who pushes the medicinal value of laughter in this goopy weepie that inexplicably is the holiday season's biggest hit. What's next for him—a remake of *Stella Dallas,* perhaps? He's playing out an old, sad showbiz story—the dulling out, at premium prices, of a once firebrand talent. (Rainer; 1/18/99) (About 2 hrs.; PG-13) *Waverly; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; Criterion Center; 86th Street; First & 62nd St. Cinema; 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Alpine; Kingsway; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Marboro; Pavilion Theatre; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Astoria; Crossbay II; Fresh Meadows; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; Hylan Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Peeping Tom—Michael Powell's controversial 1960 thriller about a murderer who captures his victim's last minutes on film. Starring Carl Boehm. (1 hr. 49 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Playing By Heart—See Rainer, page 48. (2 hrs.; R) *Village East; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; State; 72nd St. East; Lincoln Square; Metro Cinema; Alpine; Pavilion Theatre; Main Street Cinemas.*

The Prince of Egypt—There's a lot of smiting and plaguing going in this epic DreamWorks animated feature about Moses, but what really hurts is all the kitsch. The movie resembles one of those DeMille biblical epics minus the hoochie-koochie he used to work in to show us what a terrible thing sin is. The mixture of 2- and 3-D effects is technically amazing, and at least one sequence, the parting of the Red Sea, is a knockout. But conceptually the film is cheeseball. Why should we applaud an animated movie for doing the same emptily monumental things as live-action directors? (Rainer; 12/14/98) (About 2 hrs.; G) *Chelsea; State; Lincoln Square; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kings Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Crossbay II; Fresh Meadows.*

Private Confessions—A married woman's affair leads to a series of encounters with her lover and her husband. Starring Max von Sydow. Written by Ingmar Bergman. Directed by Liv Ullmann. (2 hrs. 7 mins.; NR) *BAM Rose Cinemas.*

The RugRats Movie—A new baby joins the Pickles family and sibling rivalry ensues. Based on the animated television show. Directed by Norton Virgien and Igor Kovalyov. (1 hr. 45 mins.; G) *Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Cinemart.*

Shakespeare in Love—A fanciful romp about the young Will who wrote *Romeo and Juliet* and the romantic liaison that may have led to it. Joseph Fiennes is blandly dashing as the Bard and Gwyneth Paltrow, as his muse, is blandly pretty. She'd be better off if she didn't keep trying to set herself up as the Grace Kelly of the twentysomething set. She's best when she shows some steel, as in *Hard 8* and *Flesh and Bone.* (Rainer; 12/21/98) (2 hrs.; R) *Angelika Film Center; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Fresh Meadows.*

She's All That—The senior-class president bets his best friend he can create a prom queen from the frumpiest girl in the school. Starring Freddie Prinze Jr., Jodi Lyn O'Keefe, Matthew Lillard, Usher Raymond, Paul Walker, Rachael Leigh Cook, Kieran Culkin, and Kevin Pollak. (1 hr. 26 mins.; PG-13) *Opens January 29.*

★**A Simple Plan**—A crashed small plane with four million bucks in tow is discovered in a remote game preserve by three local townspeople. Theft, murder, double-crosses ensue. Director Sam Raimi is primarily known as a gonzo goremeister with a hyperkinetic visual style, but he's pared down his act here. In his new film, wintry rural Minnesota gets the dark, elemental treatment. The snowdrifts seem to be covering up some vast horror and the *noir* fatalism is limiting. Once again we are told that greed turns good men into bad—it doth make suckers of us all. But the action is compelling and the performances by Bill Paxton and Billy Bob Thornton, playing night-and-day brothers, as well as Brent Briscoe and Bridget Fonda, are superb. (Rainer; 12/14/98) (2 hrs.; R) *Village Theatre VII; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; Pavilion Theatre.*

Steam: The Turkish Bath—A man inherits a Turkish bath from his aunt and discovers who she was and falls for the custodian's handsome son. Starring Alessandro Gassman. Directed by Ferzan Opetek. (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Stepmom—Susan Sarandon is a divorced mother who develops a friendship of sorts with her ex-husband's new girlfriend (Julia Roberts). With Ed Harris. (2 hrs.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; Criterion Center; Gemini; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Kent Triplex; Kingsway; Astoria; Centre Sunnyside; Crossbay II; Fresh Meadows; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; Hylan Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Still Crazy—A British seventies rock band attempts to reunite in 1998. Starring Stephen Rea and Billy Connolly. Directed by Brian Gibson. (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) *Lincoln Square.*

The Thin Red Line—Terrence Malick's first movie in twenty years—an adaptation of James Jones's 1962 WWII novel about an Army platoon in Guadalcanal—brings us back to that same seventies fugue state of his in which all action is aestheticized until nothing is left but patterning and pretty pictures. Malick never saw a sunset he didn't want to emblematize. A lot of powerful actors turn up—including Nick Nolte and Sean Penn—but they're upstaged by Malick's froufrou flossiness. The initial battle charge against the Japanese artillery is excitingly staged, and there are some evocative passages, but this seems less a movie about the terrors of combat than a reverie about how to preserve your refinement in the trenches. (Rainer; 1/4/99) (2 hrs. 46 mins.; R) *Ziegfeld; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Kings Plaza; Pavilion Theatre; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Astoria; Centre Sunnyside; Crossbay II; Fresh Meadows; Movieworld; The Movies at Staten Island.*

★**Touch of Evil**—Orson Welles's great 1958 thriller, which stars Welles, Charlton Heston, Janet Leigh, and Joseph Calleia, is one of the most intellectually and emotionally demanding movies ever made in Hollywood. He overloads the medium: He shoots large round faces, three or more in a frame, from underneath the chins; he sends degraded, comical figures scurrying across the shadowed De Chirico landscapes of an arcaded Mexican border town; he builds conversations that contain allusions within allusions, each character sniffing like a hound at the scent of meaning. *Touch of Evil* is tough to sit through; it's a jammed, discordant, discomforting experience—a nightmare, in fact, but a nightmare that leaves in the wake of its many complications a moral significance of disturbing perversity and brilliance. Take a deep breath and enjoy it. (Denby; 9/21/98) (1 hr. 48 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

The 24 Hour Woman—A television producer has her first baby and her life becomes chaos. Starring Rosie Perez, Marianne Jean-Baptiste, Patt0i LuPone, and Karen Duffy. Directed by Nancy Savoca. (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) *Opens January 29.*

Varsity Blues—A coming-of-age comedy revolving around a high-school football player. Starring James Van Der Beek and Jon Voight. (1 hr. 46 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; 34th Street Showplace; State; First & 62nd St. Cinema; UA East; 84th Street; Metro Cinema; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Alpine; Canarsie; Kingsway; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Ridgewood; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Astoria; Cinema City; Cinemart; Crossbay II; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; Hylan Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Velvet Goldmine—Brian Slade (Jonathan Rhys Meyers) is a glamster who gets his first glimpse of glamdom Nirvana when he witnesses a concert by the Iggy Pop–ish American singer Curt Wild (Ewan McGregor) as he prances naked and dives through hoops of fire. Pretty soon Brian is a superstar himself, and Curt is on the junkie skids. Then Brian self-destructs, staging his own mock assassination during a concert and incurring the everlasting wrath of his fans when the hoax is revealed. He drops permanently from sight. None of this is as linear as it sounds, and since everyone in the movie has the approximate human weight of a hologram, we're not really motivated to fit together the puzzle pieces of their lives. Hollow is as hollow does. *Velvet Goldmine* should be more startling than it is. (Rainer; 11/16/98) (1 hr. 57 mins.; R) *The Screening Room.*

Virus—While aboard a Soviet research boat during a hurricane, Jamie Lee Curtis and William Baldwin deal with an alien life form that regards humans as a virus. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Chelsea; Astor Plaza; 86th Street; First & 62nd St. Cinema; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Alpine; Canarsie; Kings Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Marboro; Ridgewood; Centre Sunnyside; Cinema City; Crossbay; Jackson Triplex; Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Waking Ned Devine—Compared to all the I.R.A.-themed movies we've been seeing lately, this swatch of stage-Irishness is a walk in the park. Two lifelong mates from Tully More—population 52—figure out that one of their neighbors has won the lottery. David Kelly and Ian Bannen are the dynamic duo who connive to get close to the money. They have such an easygoing rapport that you can almost forgive the fact that this film seems to have been produced strictly for the tourist trade. It

Retrospective

30 on the Isle

Is Castro good for the movies? Judge for yourself: See what's been going on in the past 40 years of Cuban film during "Revolution and Beyond: A Survey of Cuban Cinema." The 30-film retrospective—sponsored by the Film Society of Lincoln Center—includes liberation epics like Humberto Solás's *Lucia* (1968) and tales of the struggle like Tomás Gutiérrez Alea's *Stories of the Revolution* (1960, below). At the Walter Reade Theater. See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.

Photograph courtesy of the Film Society of Lincoln Center.

Festival
Women's Work

*Holding a mirror to the thoughts and concerns of women around the world—and recognizing the accomplishments of women directors in the past two decades—*BAM'S *"The Feminine Eye: Twenty Years of Women's Cinema" culls 24 films that signal important moments in women's filmmaking, including crossover movies like Sally Potter's 'Orlando' (above left) and festival favorites like Brazil's 'The Hour of the Star' (above right). Filmmakers Margarethe von Trotta, Chantal Akerman, Yvonne Rainer, and Barbara Kopple are set to attend the festival, which opens January 28 with the premiere of Nancy Savoca's 'The 24-Hour Woman.' See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.*

would make the perfect in-flight movie on Aer-Lingus. (Rainer; 12/4/98) (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG) *Chelsea; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Olympia Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart.*

The Waterboy—Adam Sandler is an accidental football star. With Kathy Bates. (2 hrs.; PG-13) *Whitestone.*

The Winners—Dutch documentarian Paul Cohen chronicles the eventual fate of a handful of violinists and pianists who, at various times, copped first prize at Belgium's prestigious Queen Elisabeth Competition. The artists he chooses all went on to middling careers—or less. Cohen's approach is vague and wrongheaded—he's in love with the heartbreak of artistry denied and implicitly equates the artistic sensibility with self-destruction. And yet, so few movies convey the almost transcendental exhilaration of classical concert performing that here, where we see that exhilaration dampened and thwarted, it seems more heartbreakingly beautiful than ever. (Rainer; 1/25/99) (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

You've Got Mail—This Tom Hanks–Meg Ryan confab, co-written and directed by Nora Ephron, is being touted as an updated Upper West Side remake of *The Shop Around the Corner.* It's more like a variation on Ephron's last Hanks-Ryan lovefest, *Sleepless in Seattle*—and just about as coy and comfy. Hanks plays a superstore book-chain magnate whose move into the neighborhood a block away from the venerable children's bookstore operated by Ryan threatens to put her out of business. Unbeknownst to each other, these two combatants are also e-mail lovemates. Ephron plays up the world of cyber-romance for heartfelt winsomeness. Hanks and Ryan know how to play out the superficial charms of their superficial characters. In this superficial movie age, it's a useful gift. (Rainer; 1/4/99) (1 hr. 58 mins.; PG) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; Criterion Center; New York Twin; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Olympia Theatre; Alpine; Marboro; The Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Astoria; Fresh Meadows; Movieworld; Hylan Plaza; The Movies at Staten Island.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *Affliction; Another Day in Paradise; Hurly Burly; Life Is Beautiful; Shakespeare in Love.*

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *Elizabeth; The Hi-Lo Country.*

Cinema Village 12th St.—22 E. 12th St. (924-3364) *The Emperor's Shadow; Port Djema.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Mississippi Mermaid; Peeping Tom; Touch of Evil; The Winners.*

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (255-8800) *Central Station; Dr. Akagi; Gods and Monsters; Steam: The Turkish Bath.*

The Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (334-2100) *The Celebration; Velvet Goldmine.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Union Square—13th St. and Broadway (253-2225) *Dancing at Lughnasa; Enemy of the State; The Faculty; Hilary & Jackie; Little Voice; Mighty Joe Young; Patch Adams; The Prince of Egypt; Saving Private Ryan; The Thin Red Line; Waking Ned Devine.*

Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *American History X; A Bug's Life; A Civil Action; The General; Happiness; Playing By Heart.*

Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *At First Sight; In Dreams; A Simple Plan; Stepmom; Varsity Blues; You've Got Mail.*

Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (505-CINE#603) *Elizabeth; Patch Adams.*

14th–41st Streets

19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *A Civil Action; Gloria; In Dreams; Stepmom; Varsity Blues; You've Got Mail.*

34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (532-5544) *Patch Adams; Shakespeare in Love; Varsity Blues.*

Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#597) *Enemy of the State; The Faculty; Hurly Burly; Patch Adams; Playing By Heart; The Prince of Egypt; Shakespeare in Love; Virus; Waking Ned Devine.*

Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#614) *At First Sight; Elizabeth.*

Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *At First Sight; A Civil Action; Gloria; Playing By Heart.*

42nd–60th Streets

59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#615) *Gods and Monsters.*

Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Virus.*

Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *A Civil Action; Shakespeare in Love.*

Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *At First Sight; Hilary & Jackie.*

Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *At First Sight; Enemy of the State; Mighty Joe Young; Patch Adams; Stepmom; You've Got Mail.*

Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *Happiness.*

Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *Living Out Loud; Pleasantville.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *A Civil Action.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (688-3800) *Life Is Beautiful.*

State—1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (391-2900) *The Faculty; In Dreams; Playing By Heart; The Prince of Egypt; Varsity Blues.*

Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State.*

Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *I Still Know What You Did Last Summer; John Carpenter's Vampires; Psycho; Rush Hour; Star Trek: Insurrection; There's Something About Mary.*

Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (505-CINE#602) *The Thin Red Line.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *Playing By Heart.*

86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (505-CINE#604) *Patch Adams; Virus.*

Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (505-CINE#606) *Little Voice.*

First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *Elizabeth; In Dreams; Patch Adams; A Simple Plan; Varsity Blues; Virus; Waking Ned Devine.*

Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *Gods and Monsters; Out of Sight; Stepmom.*

New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *Affliction; You've Got Mail.*

Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (828-9738) *At First Sight; A Civil Action; Gloria; Shakespeare in Love; Stepmom; The Thin Red Line; You've Got Mail.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *Varsity Blues.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (505-CINE#864) *The Celebration.*

84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *Gloria; Patch Adams; The Thin Red Line; Varsity Blues; Virus.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *Affliction; Central Station; Children of Heaven; The General; Hilary & Jackie; My Name Is Joe.*

Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *At First Sight; A Civil Action; Hurly Burly; In Dreams; Playing By Heart; The Prince of Egypt; Shakespeare in Love; A Simple Plan; Stepmom; Still Crazy; You've Got Mail.*

Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (505-CINE#609) *Playing By Heart; Varsity Blues.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *At First Sight; Gloria; Varsity Blues; Virus.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *Mighty Joe Young; The Prince of Egypt; Virus.*

Olympia Theatre—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (505-CINE#613) *Waking Ned Devine; You've Got Mail.*

Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *Elizabeth.*

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *At First Sight; A Civil Action; Down in the Delta; Enemy of the State; The Faculty; In Dreams; Mighty Joe Young; Patch Adams; The Prince of Egypt; Stepmom; The Thin Red Line; Varsity Blues; Virus.*

Photographs courtesy of the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) *At First Sight; A Bug's Life; Enemy of the State; The Faculty; Gloria; In Dreams; Mighty Joe Young; The Prince of Egypt; Varsity Blues; Virus.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) *At First Sight; A Bug's Life; A Civil Action; Enemy of the State; The Faculty; Gloria; In Dreams; Mighty Joe Young; Patch Adams; The Prince of Egypt; The RugRats Movie; Varsity Blues; Virus; The Waterboy.*

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Gloria; Patch Adams; Playing By Heart; Varsity Blues; Virus; You've Got Mail.*

BAM Rose Cinemas—30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (623-2770) *Central Station; Down in the Delta; Hilary & Jackie; My Name Is Joe; Private Confessions.*

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (596-7070) *Call theatre for showtimes.*.

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *In Dreams; Varsity Blues; Virus.*

Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) *Call theatre for showtimes.*.

Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Gloria; Patch Adams; Playing By Heart; Varsity Blues; Virus.*

Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-FILM#576) *Enemy of the State; The Faculty; The Prince of Egypt; Virus.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *At First Sight; In Dreams; Stepmom.*

Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *The Faculty; Gloria; In Dreams; The Prince of Egypt; The Thin Red Line; Virus.*

Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *At First Sight; A Civil Action; Patch Adams; Stepmom; Varsity Blues.*

Linden Boulevard Multiplex—Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (277-0303) *At First Sight; A Bug's Life; A Civil Action; Down in the Delta; Enemy of the State; The Faculty; Gloria; In Dreams; Mighty Joe Young; Patch Adams; The Prince of Egypt; The RugRats Movie; Varsity Blues; Virus.*

Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *Mighty Joe Young; Patch Adams; Virus; You've Got Mail.*

Pavilion Theatre—188 Prospect Park West (369-0838) *A Civil Action; Hurly Burly; In Dreams; Patch Adams; Playing By Heart; A Simple Plan; The Thin Red Line.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *At First Sight; In Dreams; Mighty Joe Young; Varsity Blues; Virus.*

The Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *At First Sight; A Civil Action; The Faculty; Patch Adams; The Prince of Egypt; The Thin Red Line; Varsity Blues; You've Got Mail.*

Queens

Area Code 718

Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *The Faculty; Patch Adams; Stepmom; The Thin Red Line; Varsity Blues; You've Got Mail.*

Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (361-6869) *Gloria; Stepmom; The Thin Red Line; Virus; Waking Ned Devine.*

Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *At First Sight; Gloria; In Dreams; Varsity Blues; Virus.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *Hilary & Jackie; In Dreams; Mighty Joe Young; The RugRats Movie; Varsity Blues; Waking Ned Devine.*

Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *A Civil Action; In Dreams; Virus.*

Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *The Faculty; Mighty Joe Young; Patch Adams; The Prince of Egypt; Stepmom; The Thin Red Line; Varsity Blues.*

Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *A Civil Action; Patch Adams; The Prince of Egypt; Shakespeare in Love; Stepmom; The Thin Red Line; You've Got Mail.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *Gloria; In Dreams; Virus.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (263-4828) *At First Sight; A Civil Action; In Dreams; Patch Adams; Playing By Heart; Stepmom; Varsity Blues.*

Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *At First Sight; Patch Adams; The Prince of Egypt; Stepmom; The Thin Red Line; Virus; You've Got Mail.*

Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *At First Sight; Mighty Joe Young; Patch Adams; Stepmom; The Thin Red Line; Varsity Blues; You've Got Mail.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *Elizabeth; Enemy of the State; You've Got Mail.*

Plaza—103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *At First Sight; Virus.*

The Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) .

Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (459-8944) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *A Civil Action; Elizabeth; Gloria; In Dreams; Jack Frost; Mighty Joe Young; Patch Adams; The RugRats Movie; Stepmom; The Thin Red Line; Varsity Blues; You've Got Mail.*

Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *A Civil Action; Patch Adams; Stepmom; Varsity Blues; You've Got Mail.*

The Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *At First Sight; A Bug's Life; A Civil Action; The Faculty; In Dreams; Mighty Joe Young; Patch Adams; Stepmom; The Thin Red Line; Varsity Blues; Virus; You've Got Mail.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

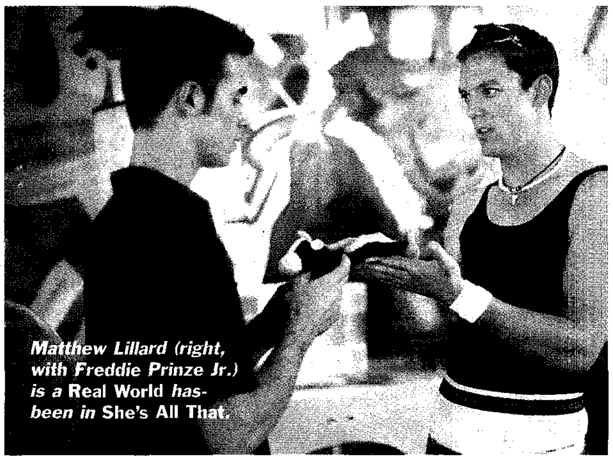
American Museum of the Moving Image (AMMI)—36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-4520). Tickets, $4.50– $8.50. Members and children under 4, free. **Anthology Film Archives**—1/26: Florian Flicker's *Suzie Washington* (1997). "New Filmmakers Series: Alternative Lifestyles." 1/27: Shorts and *Next Year in Jerusalem* (1998). "Sergei Eisenstein." 1/28: *Bronenosets Potemkin* (1925). 1/30: *Ivan the Terrible* (1944–46). 1/31: *Old and New* (1929). "Jewish Life in Shanghai." 1/28: *Exile Shanghai* (Part 1) (1997). 1/29: Part II and *Madame X: An Absolute Ruler* (1977). "Avant-garde Japanese Masters." 1/30: Films by Yamamoto Kansuke, Kitasono Katue, and Ohno Kazuo. "Special Screenings." 1/30: *Seven Women, Seven Films* (1987) and *Kings With*

Talent

He's All That

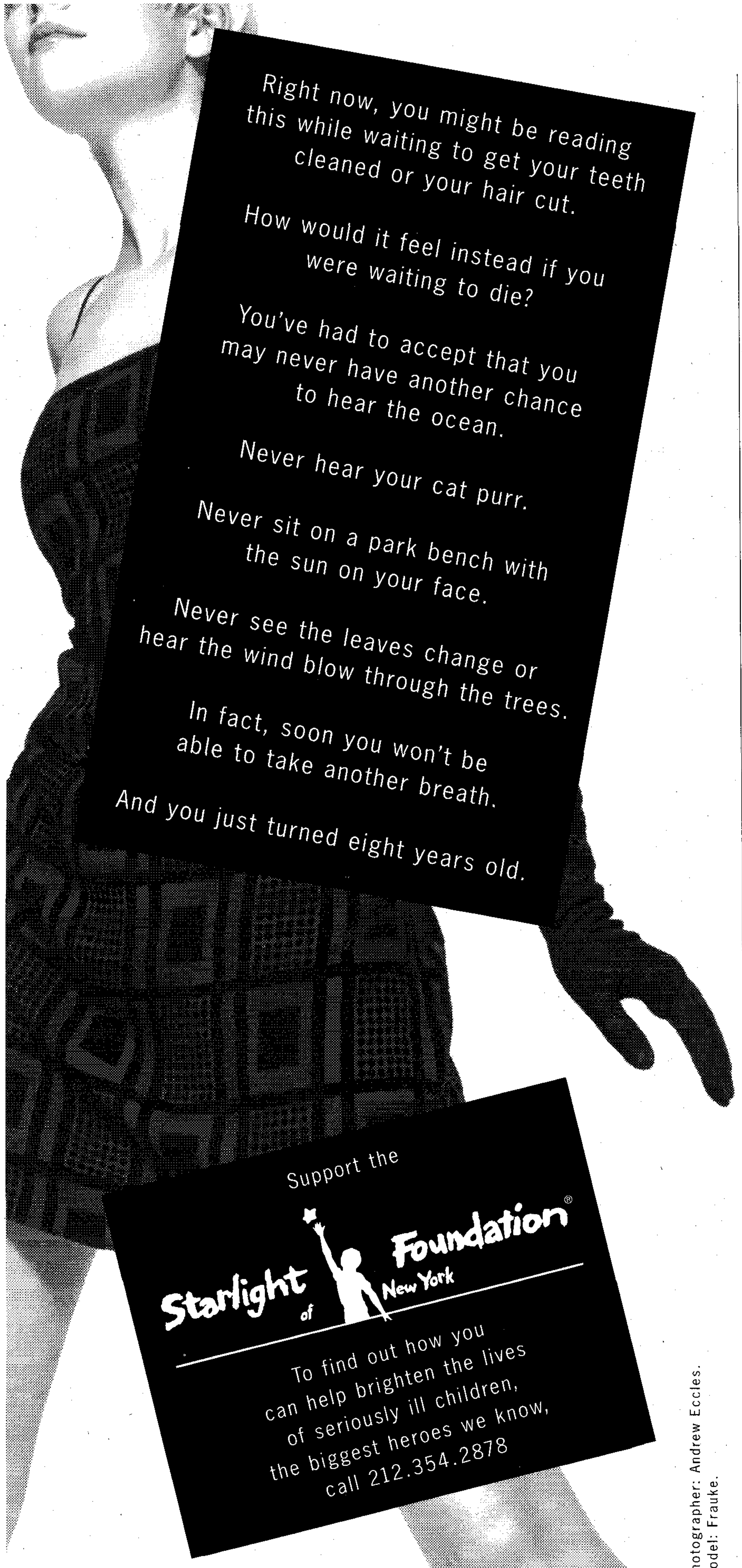
To the list of actors we haven't seen enough of yet, add Matthew Lillard, the wildly exuberant presence in movies like *Scream.* Happily, Hollywood's noticed, and we're about to get a large dose of him. He's been on the scene for five years, and—with twenty films under his belt (his first was 1991's *Ghoulies III*)—he's just now getting some heftier roles. "Everyone thinks that overnight you do your first movie and you're a star and you're all set," he says. "The truth of the matter is, that's the first test. You have to continue to work. You have to self-motivate and stay busy to keep your hopes up. But it's all working out well now." Indeed it is: His knack for turning a supporting role into the most memorable, comically rewarding part of a film—most recently, in the high-school Pygmalion tale *She's All That* (opening January 29), in which he plays an MTV *Real World* has-been—has helped to land him the part of Longaville in Kenneth Branagh's version of *Love's Labor's Lost.* Auditioning opposite Branagh for a role in Shakespeare's tale of four men who swear off women for three years to pursue knowledge was "like shooting baskets with Michael Jordan," says Lillard. " '*To be or not to be*' with Kenneth Branagh is pretty overwhelming." But that's just filming now: Lillard is due onscreen in March, in the highly touted *SLC Punk!*, the story of two guys who try to be countercultural in Salt Lake City in the eighties. It's a role he believes may "open up different avenues." Does that mean, at 29, he's swearing off teenage comedies? "You know, I'm not done with anything," he says. "My whole goal is to continue to work. So . . . comedy, teenage, it doesn't really matter. I've been around for a little while now and I feel confident in who I am as an actor and as a person. I'm preparing myself for going to the next level." Sounds like he's just about there.

PATRICIA FALVO



Matthew Lillard (right, with Freddie Prinze Jr.) is a **Real World** *has-been in* **She's All That.**

Photograph by Claudette Barius/Miramax Films.



Right now, you might be reading this while waiting to get your teeth cleaned or your hair cut.

How would it feel instead if you were waiting to die?

You've had to accept that you may never have another chance to hear the ocean.

Never hear your cat purr.

Never sit on a park bench with the sun on your face.

Never see the leaves change or hear the wind blow through the trees.

In fact, soon you won't be able to take another breath.

And you just turned eight years old.

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Photographer: Andrew Eccles.
Model: Frauke.

Straw Mats (1986). "Brakhage." 1/31: *Ellipses* (1998). Extended through 2/7: *My Knees Were Jumping: Remembering the Kindertransport* (1996). 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110); $7.

Cinema Classics—"Paranoia" film series. Single or double feature, $5. 332 E. 11th St.; call 675-6692 for info.

Congregation Emanu-El—"The Troubled Soul: Jewish Mysticism in Film." 1/26: *The Vow* (1937). 2/2: *The Dybbuk* (1937). Free admission. Leon Lowenstein Auditorium, Goldsmith Religious School Bldg., 10 E. 66th St. (744-1400).

A Different Light—1/31: *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* (1970). 7 P.M. 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Donnell Media Center—"A Matter of Faith: Forces of Good and Evil." 1/27: *The Queen of Spades* (1949). "Jazz in Motion: The Rhapsody Films." 1/28: *Born to Swing* (1973) and *Robert Altman's Jazz '34* (1996). "Meet the Makers." 1/30: Bruce Ricker of *The Last of the Blue Devils* (1979). 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619); free.

The Feminine Eye—Twenty-five feature films by woman filmmakers from around the world. At BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn. Tickets $8.50–$50. For more info, call 718-623-2770.

Film Society of Lincoln Center (The Walter Reade Theater)—"A Survey of Cuban Cinema." Through 2/25: Thirty films made in Cuba during the past 40 years. "The 8th Annual New York Jewish Film Festival." Through 1/27: A 22-film survey of Jewish life around the world. "Great Performers." 1/18: *Elgar* (1962). "Great Pianists of the 20th Century on Film." 1/31: Sviatoslav Richter plays Liszt, Chopin, and Prokofiev, and Emil Gilels plays Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and Prokofiev. 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600); regular screenings, $8.50–$15.

French Institute—1/26: *My Life in Pink* (1997). 2/2: *The Eagle With Two Heads* (1947). Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160); $7.

Japan Society—"Anime: The History of Japanese Animated Films." Through 2/26: A comprehensive look of the genre, from the forties to the present. 1/23–1/24: Premiere of *Jinroh* (1999), by Mamoru Oshii, with a discussion by the director. 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015); $5 members, $8 nonmembers, students, and senior citizens.

Museum of Modern Art—"Special Screenings." 1/29: *Lee Marvin: A Personal Portrait* (1998), *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962), and *Hell in the Pacific* (1968). 1/30: *Barrabas* (parts 1–5) (1919). 1/31: *Barrabas* (parts 6–12) (1919). "Big As Life: 8-mm Films." 1/28: Films by Strickland and Gladstone. "New Documentaries." 1/28–1/29: *Paulina* (1998). "Robert Bresson." 1/22–2/7: A complete retrospective of the acclaimed French director. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9400); free with $9.50 admission.

New York University—"Dancing in the Rain: Indo-Egyptian Musical Films." 1/28–30: Egyptian and Indian musical films. Free. Cantor Film Center, 36 E. 8th St. Call 998-8872 for reservations.

The Screening Room—Friday and Saturday at midnight: *Unmade Beds* (1998). Sunday brunch: *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). Call theater for info. 54 Varick St. (334-2100); $8 ($5 for Sunday brunch patrons).

Tonic—"Monday Night Film Series." 2/4: *Dutch Harbor* (1997). Tickets, $4. 107 Norfolk St. For more info, call 358-7503.

YWCA Cine-Club—"A Celebration of Japanese Cinema." 1/30–1/31: *Gate of Hell* (1953). 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (735-9717); $6 members, $7 nonmembers.

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer…A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element…Reviews are followed by the theaters where the film is playing.

theater

Uma does Molière . . . Churchill's *Blue Heart*

Broadway

Previews and Openings

Death of a Salesman—This fiftieth-anniversary production of Arthur Miller's finest had the critics raving in Chicago. Brian Dennehy, Elizabeth Franz, and Kevin Anderson star. $45–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 2/10 opening. *Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (239-6200).*

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown—Happiness is, potentially, the revival of this musical, directed by Michael Mayer and starring Anthony Rapp. With book, lyrics, and music by Clark Gesner; based on Charles M. Schulz's *Peanuts* comic strip. $15–$75. Tues.–Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 1 and 5. In previews for a 2/4 opening. *Ambassador Theatre, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200).*

Now Playing

Art—I sympathize with this play by Yasmina Reza. Serge spends 200,000 francs on a five-by-four painting by the renowned Antrios that is all white except for some diagonal scratches. His friend Marc considers this Antrios shit, and Serge's purchase of it an insult to their friendship. He tries to enlist the third of our musketeers, Yvan, to side with him. But confronted with Serge and the painting, Yvan does what he does best: He wavers. Reza's cunning dialogue has been fluently Englished by Christopher Hampton. (Simon: 3/16/98 and 10/5/98.) Now with Judd Hirsch, Joe Morton, and George Wendt. $45–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 3/1/98. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Toni Braxton plays the girl; James Barbour plays the (hairy) boy. With Tony-award-winning costumes by Ann Hould-Ward; lyrics by Tim Rice and Howard Ashman; music by Alan Menken. $22.50–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100).*

The Beauty Queen of Leenane—Martin McDonagh's Drama Desk Award–winning drama about an old woman's attempts to sabotage her daughter's love life. $20–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

The Blue Room—Nicole Kidman—!!!—and Iain Glen each play five roles in David Hare's modern adaptation of *La Ronde,* Arthur Schnitzler's classic story of interconnected couples and sexual anxieties. $15–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Cabaret—The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for re-creating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Aided by Rob Marshall as co-director and choreographer, Mendes confirms his directorial reputation with the nightclub scenes. Joe Masteroff's refurbished book emphasizes the squalor of 1930 Berlin nightlife and the bisexuality of Clifford, the writer hero. The supporting cast delivers staunchly. Shortcomings notwithstanding, this revival has enough to satisfy all but the most fastidious. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Now starring Jennifer Jason Leigh and Alan Cumming. $65–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8:00, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opened 3/19/98. *Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (239-6200).*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $37.50–$70. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Chicago—Revisiting this splendid production two years later presents three big obstacles. As Velma, the German star Ute Lemper cannot duplicate Bebe Neuwirth's devastating sardonicism, sprightly kittenishness, and superhuman timing.

Opening

Uma, Theatah. Theatah, Uma.

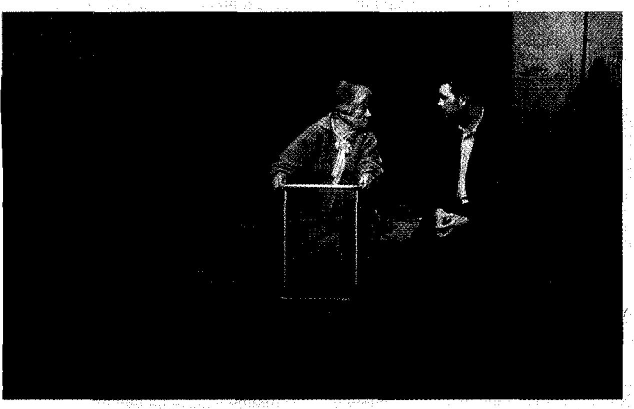
Forget Moomba and the Mercer Kitchen. These days, the best place for New Yorkers to spot a movie star (not that they're *really* searching for them, not that they *really* care . . . hey, is that Madonna over at table nine?) is at the Classic Stage Company, where the completion of a major motion picture seems to have become a prerequisite for employment. CSC's last production, *Waiting for Godot,* starred John Turturro, Tony Shalhoub, and Christopher Lloyd; its upcoming show, a modern adaptation of *The Misanthrope,* stars (drum roll, please) Uma Thurman, who has never done professional stage work before. One could argue that Barry Edelstein, the small nonprofit's new artistic director (and director of *The Misanthrope*), is taking a big gamble here—what does CSC stand for, anyway? Celebrities Seeking Credibility? "I know, I know," he says. "People say, 'Oh Christ, is there a movie-stars-only policy?' But I say, 'No, it's a good-actors-only policy.' Once people come see the show, they'll see what I mean—Uma's got the chops. " Turturro, to be fair, was terrific in *Godot;* he was a marvelous stage actor long before he ever found the camera. Uma has done some fetching film work, so . . . well . . . why not? "Besides," continues Edelstein, "the last I checked, if you're running a theater, it's a good idea to have an audience seeing what you're doing." And when Edelstein inherited CSC, it was struggling financially. Surely there are worse ways to lift a nonprofit out of the dumps than to give it a little glamour. "We're not doing stage versions of sitcoms," Edelstein reminds. "It's still *Beckett.* And *Molière.*" Thurman, for her part, is tremendously enthusiastic about the whole enterprise. She says she hasn't received many invitations to do theater—or at least, as she puts it, theater with heart. "As an actress working in film," she says, "not many people would think that you'd want to do it, or that you *could* do it." Does this foray into the theater frighten her? "Anything worth doing has a fright-value," she says, after some consideration. "In fact, you can measure the value of something by how intimidating it is to approach." Uma's character does entirely suit her; she plays an artful, beautiful American starlet who wins over the heart of a fusty playwright, played by the impeccable Roger Rees. Martin Crimp, who adapted last spring's cheeky version of *The Chairs,* also adapted Molière's text, and it's filled with the same saucy couplets. (Sample: "The world's a mess. Absolutely. We fucked it. / Why not just sit back and deconstruct it?") Though speaking like that for two hours can be challenging. "I feel like I've bitten off a bit more than I can chew," confesses Thurman. "But I always operate the most happily when I'm slightly overwhelmed." **JENNIFER SENIOR**

Photograph by Dixie Sheridan.

Similarly, Karen Ziemba, a lovely dancer and likable singer, radiates innocent chirpiness that is all wrong for Roxie. The fussy oiliness of Tom McGowan, the new Amos, simply flops. Still, there are compensations. You now pay more attention to the glittering ensemble work of the rest, and relish the new and even better Mary Sunshine of R. Bean. (Simon: 11/30/98.) $20–$75. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Electra—Zoë Wanamaker plays Agamemnon's grieving, vengeful daughter in this new production of Sophocles' play, ably adapted by Frank McGuinness. Also starring Claire Bloom. $35–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

Footloose—Kevin Bacon is not a part of this maxi-musical adaptation of the 1984 movie, but the lead does have his haircut. Let's hear it for the boy! $20–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 10/22/98. *Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*



Opening

Families Untied

Caryl Churchill's plays can almost always be counted on to take your head for a spin, and 'Blue Heart,' a pair of her most recent one-acts, is no exception. In the first, a man and woman speak in sentence beginnings or endings; in the second, random words—'kettle,' for instance—insinuate themselves repeatedly into the dialogue. The London critics almost unanimously agreed that these experiments had terrific comic and poetic payoffs—particularly in the second play, about a young man's sadistic efforts to convince several older women they're his birth mother. Opens January 29 at the BAM *Majestic Theater.*

Fosse—A tribute to the late choreographer-director, whose swivelin'-hips-and-bowler-hat aesthetic came roaring back with the revival of *Chicago.* $55–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, music by Frank Wildhorn. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St.(239-6200).*

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $15–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 3 hrs. 15 mins.*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical.* Kiddies will delightedly swallow it whole, unless they are tiny and flappable. But this is the one such show adults will feast on, too, mostly because of the wonders wrought by Julie Taymor, who designed and directed this cornucopia of dazzlements. Puppetry from East and West is put to superlative use, yet the actors, singers, and dancers are accorded enough humanity to ply their anthropomorphic skills. And Taymor has found ways to transmute the strictly cartoonish bravura of the big-screen Lion King onto a stage so that nothing is lost in translation. (Simon: 12/1/97). $20–$80. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened 11/13/97. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (307-4747).*

Little Me—Neil Simon tailor-made the book of this Cy Coleman and Carolyn Leigh musical for Sid Caesar, and Martin Short—with his quick-molting skin and rubbery face—is an Antony to Caesar if ever there was one. Watch as he tears through the roles of Noble Eggleston (doctor, lawyer, governor of both Dakotas), Amos Pinchley (miser), Otto Schnitzler (Hollywood despot), and four others, while Faith Prince sails along as his belle Belle from Drifter's Row. $75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. *Roundabout Theatre Company's Stage Right, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-1300).*

Miss Saigon—This reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly,* set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon, is now one of Broadway's ten longest-running musicals. Music by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200).*

Parade—The seemingly un-songworthy subject of this new musical, the wrongful conviction of a factory manager for the murder of a young white girl, is what one would expect of director Hal Prince; the context, Jewish Atlanta in the early part of this century, is what one would expect of Alfred Uhry. Jason Robert Brown did the music. Brent Carver stars. $40–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

The Phantom of the Opera—Nine leads, eleven years, and roughly 7 million theatergoers later, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Ragtime—A musical based on E. L. Doctorow's historical novel, with a book by Terrence McNally and music by the composer-lyricist team of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens. The epic neatly braids the fates of three fictitious families—one black, one Jewish, one Wasp—and an assortment of historical characters. $31–$125. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 1/18/97. *Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

The Scarlet Pimpernel—The show about romance, honor, the French Revolution, and, most important, fabric. Pop composer Frank Wildhorn (*Jekyll & Hyde*) did the score. Nan Knighton has recently revised her book, adapted from Baroness Orczy's novel for the stage. Douglas Sills stars. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (307-4100).*

Side Man—A *must.* This enjoyable play by Warren Leight is about sidemen, yesteryear's second-tier jazz musicians who hired out as supplementary players to various bands, and about their women. It is narrated by Clifford, the son of Gene, a trumpet player, and Terry, a sweet thing turned bitter. As the play moves from 1985 to 1953 and back, we hear about his parents' courtship, his birth, and the parents' growing estrangement as he grows up. We also get glimpses of the lives of Gene's fellow sidemen. As things move near-imperceptibly from comedy to drama, we relish the jive, the jokes, the frustrations enacted by seven actors in a production neatly tied together by Michael Mayer's apt direction. (Simon: 3/23/98.) Now with Christian Slater. $25–$60. Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, and Sun. at 3. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the songbook Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller wrote to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $65–$75. *At the Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

The Sound of Music—Returns to Broadway for the first time since its 1959 premiere. Hum along; bring the kids. Rebecca Luker, who played a memorable Magnolia in *Show Boat,* plays the nun turned governess, and Dennis Parlato plays the widower captain. $30–$75. Tues. at 8, Thurs. at 7, Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7; Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opened 3/12/98. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Titanic—What it lacks in suspense it makes up for in Tony awards (five, in 1997, including Best Musical). Music and lyrics by Maury Yeston; book by Peter Stone. Directed by Richard Jones. $45–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 4/23/97. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Ashes to Ashes—David Strathairn stars in this 1996 Harold Pinter play about a marriage in crisis. $24–$48. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30; Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. In previews for a 2/7 opening. Through 5/9. *Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (777-4900).*

Blue Heart—A pair of one-acts from the scathing Caryl Churchill, who this time examines the breakdown of family life. $20–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Sun. at 3. Runs 1/29 through 2/21. *Brooklyn*

Photograph by Michael Cooper, courtesy of the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

MILLIONS OF STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

Hundreds of thousands of people will be doing the MS Walk, because the dollars raised help to find a cure and provide programs for people with MS—a chronic, often disabling disease. The physical effects of MS are totally unpredictable, but the one thing people with MS can count on is the help of the National MS Society, and people like you.

For more information about the '99 Spring MS Walk in your community, call 1 800 FIGHT MS.

MS
NATIONAL
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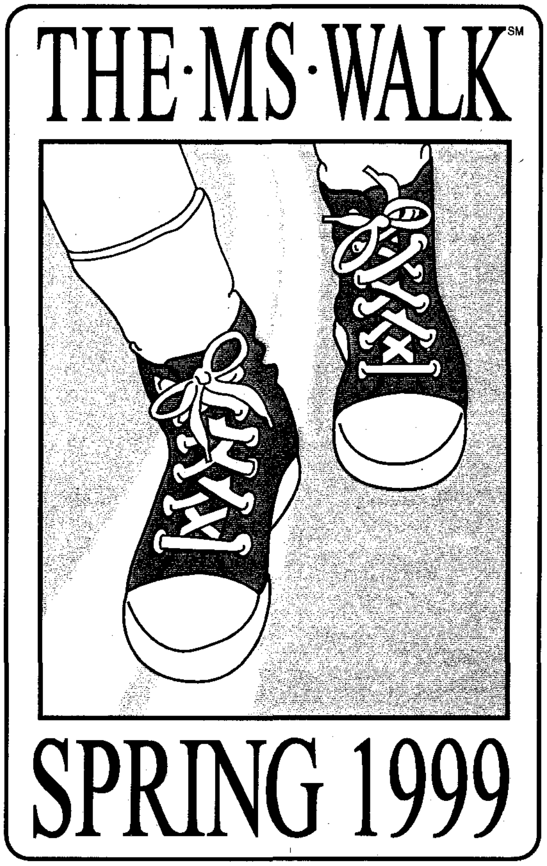
SOCIETY

One thing people with MS can count on.



Academy of Music's Majestic Theater, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4100).

Captains Courageous, The Musical—The musical version of Rudyard Kipling's novel about the spoiled son of an industrialist who falls off the decks of his father's luxury liner and into the hands of a kindly commercial fisherman. Treat Williams and Brandon Espinoza star; Frederick Freyer did the music; Patrick Cook did the book and lyrics. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 4. In previews for a 2/16 opening. *Manhattan Theatre Club, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Correct Me If I'm Right—Kate Clinton, who manages to make her feminist principles funny, returns to New York with her first one-woman show since *Out Is In*. $30–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30. In previews for a 1/28 opening. *Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (307-4100).*

The Eros Trilogy—A three-paneled work by Nicky Silver connecting mothers and sons. Starring Zak Orth, T. Scott Cunningham, and the always-formidable Betty Buckley. $35. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8. In previews for a 2/4 opening. *Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. (353-3874).*

High Life—A play by first-time playwright Lee MacDougall, Canada's answer to Quentin Tarantino. Watch for drugs, paranoid dialogue, and yep, an aborted heist. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 1/27 opening. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (333-4052).*

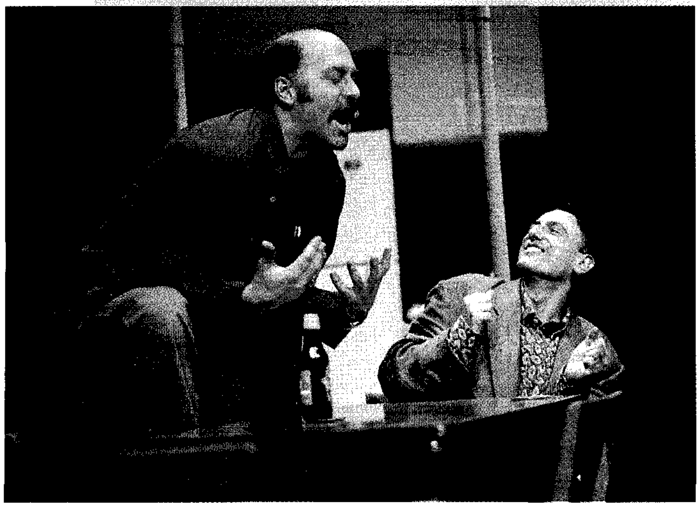
James Naughton: Street of Dreams—It's two hours of crooning from the two-time Tony marvy James Naughton. $50. Wed.–Sun. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Previews begin 1/28 for a 2/4 opening. *Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (239-6200).*

Making Tracks—A brief rock-and-roll history of the Asian-American experience, as told through the story of a young woman who's trying to make sense of both her own and her parents' worlds. $20. Mon.–Wed. and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 1/30 for a 2/4 opening. Through 2/14. *Taipei Theater, 1221 Sixth Avenue, bet. 48th and 49th Sts. (340-1095).*

The Mineola Twins—Swoosie Kurtz stars in this new play by Paula Vogel, author of the Pulitzer-winning *How I Learned to Drive*, about womanhood in suburbia. Directed by Joe Mantello. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. In previews for a 2/18 opening. *Roundabout Theatre Company, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-9300).*

Opening Canucked Up

Watch for articulate hooligans, boffo paranoia, and yep, an aborted bank heist, in *High Life*, Canada's stagebound answer to *Reservoir Dogs*. Freshman playwright Lee MacDougall wrote it; Casey Childs directs. Opens January 27 at Primary Stages.



Photograph by James Leynse.

The Misanthrope—Uma Thurman plays a pretty yet dim American starlet in this Molière comedy, which translator Martin Crimp has wisely re-set in contemporary London. Roger Rees also stars; directed by Barry Edelstein. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 1/28 for a 2/14 opening. Through 2/28. *Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. (239-6200).*

The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told—Paul Rudnick, acclaimed author of *In & Out*, *Jeffrey*, and other assorted bits of gay fantasia, spins the Old Testament. $35–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. Reopens 1/29. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. (420-8000).*

Now Playing

The American Jew—An assortment of American Jews shared their feelings about their faith to create the script for this one-person show, alternately performed by Victor Attar and Catherine Curtin. $35. Wed.–Mon. at 3 and 8. *Judith Anderson Theater, 422 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Inventive, and appropriate for just about everyone—kids, adults, foreigners, haters and lovers of performance art. $39–$49. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

The Captain's Tiger— Athol Fugard's memoir for the stage, examining his youthful travels, misadventures, struggles with self-expression, and relationship with mum. $36. Tues.–Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Manhattan Theatre Club's Stage II, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Chaim's Love Song—Marvin Chernoff's play about the relationship between a young Irish woman and a retired mailman. $35. Wed. at 5 and 8, Thurs. at 2, Fri. at 2 and 8, Sat. at 2 and 5, Sun. at 1. *Raymond J. Greenwald Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. (633-6322).*

Collected Stories—Donald Margulies's almost-Pulitzer-winning play about the friendship between a protégée and her mentor—and how it transforms when the former uses intimate details of the latter's life in her first published novel. Uta Hagen and Lorca Simons star. $42.50–$47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).*

The Country Wife—William Wycherley's classic send-up of the English gentry, in which a man gains access to the homes of many an unsuspecting husband by claiming he's a eunuch. $20–$33. Tues., Thurs., Fri., and Sat. at 8; Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Through 1/31. *Pearl Theatre Company, 80 St. Marks Pl. (598-9802).*

A Couple of Blaguards—Tired yet of the brothers McCourt? Good! We thought not. Come see Frank and Malachy's stage version of their growing-up story, performed by actors Mickey Kelly and Shay Duffin. $40–$42.50. Mon., Tues., Thurs., and Fri. at 8; Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (799-4599).*

De la Guarda—It's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. Dress in tatters; bring aspirin. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (239-6200).*

Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).*

Far East—A new play from A. R. Gurney about a young American Navy lieutenant who finds himself caught between the wife of his commanding officer and the woman he loves. Starring Michael Hayden. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

Forbidden Broadway Cleans Up!—Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way. $45–$47.50. Mon. and Wed.–Fri. at 8:15; Sat. at 2:30 and 8:15; Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available/optional. *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (239-6200).*

Hedwig and the Angry Inch—Michael Cerveris stars in John Cameron Mitchell's stunning rock concert–cum–musical, in which a German transsexual achieves self-actualization, not to mention tabloid fame, through songwriting. Also featuring Stephen Trask and his downtown band, Cheater. $39.50–$49.50. Mon. and Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. *Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love—has decided to buck the trend. $47.50–$50. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

Iphigenia Cycle—The renaissance in Greek drama continues apace with these two stories of Agamemnon's daughter (her sacrifice, her rescue) rolled into one. JoAnne Akalaitis directs. Theatre for a New Audience presents. $10–$40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Through 2/14. *American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Killer Joe—Tracy Letts's new (and first) play about a dysfunctional family in a Texas trailer park. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 5, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. *Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (239-6200).*

Late Nite Catechism—Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school-teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 5. *St. Luke's Church Annex, 308 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Little by Little—Liz Larsen, Darrin Baker, and *Jekyll & Hyde*'s Christiane Noll star in this new, sung-through Brad Ross musical about a love triangle. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. *Theatre at Saint Peter's Church, Citicorp Center, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. (935-5820).*

A Majority of One—The Jewish Repertory Theatre presents this 1959 comedy about a Jewish widow and retired Japanese businessman who meet and fall in love on an ocean liner. $35. Tues.–Thurs. and Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 2/7. *Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (831-2000).*

The Mystery of Irma Vep—The late Charles Ludlam's penny-dreadful vehicle for himself, Everett Quinton, and a mound of wigs. It was a loopy sensation in 1984; Quinton returns for this repeat engagement with Stephen DeRosa. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Westside Theater, 407 W. 43nd St. (239-6200).*

Over the River and Through the Woods—A new comedy from Joe DiPietro, author of *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, about the meddling efforts of four Italian-American grandparents to change the life of their grandson. $45. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Paradise Hotel—The latest from Richard Foreman, this time about a group of paranoid sexual adventurers who converge in their quest for Nirvana and fine lodging. $15. Tues. and Thurs.–Sun. at 8. *Ontological Theatre at St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (533-4650).*

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—There is a decent amount of merriment to be had from this revue. Inspired—or incited—by a homonymous travel guide, this show by a number of hands pokes fun at every aspect of travel, from the hopeless phone calls for airline reservations to the joys of sandy Uzbekistan. Nothing is overlooked, though some things are a mite undercooked. Even the Ca*th*tilian li*th*p ge*th* a tuneful *th*ong tribute. (Simon: 12/15/97.) $20–$47.50; optional dinner one hour before curtain. Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened 10/30/97. *Ibis Theatre, 321 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Some Voices—A gentler, more heartbreaking import from the New Group about a restaurant owner who takes on the responsibility of caring for his schizophrenic brother. $15–$30. Mon. at 7, Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 4. Through 2/6. *Theater at St. Clements, 423 W. 46th St. (279-4200).*

Stomp—As the title implies, an energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. $24.50–$49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (477-2477).*

Stop Kiss—Diana Son's new play about a smart, single woman whose world flips upside-down when she falls in love with another woman. Starring Jessica Hecht. $30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 1/31. *The Public's Shiva Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

This Is Our Youth—Kenneth Lonergan's concerns smooth Dennis, a school dropout and drug dealer; his friend the dopey and klutzy Warren Straub, who shows up with a suitcase full of his prized possessions plus fifteen grand he swiped from his remarried old man; and Jessica Goldman, summoned to be Warren's companion on a proposed heavy double date. A world is conjured up—a world observed and overheard with spine-tingling accuracy and scalpel-like penetration. Mark Ruffalo is the perfect Warren. Missy Yager is a gem of a Jessica. Mark Brokaw's direction remains exemplary. And when the comedy eventually turns serious, the transition is flawless and shattering. (Simon: 11/16/98.) $40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St.*, then a reception at *Vinnie Black's Vegas Room, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St.*, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $65–$75. Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 2. *(239-6200).*

Wit—Can a play be made out of the last hours of a professor of literature dying of ovarian cancer? A play that hinges on a close reading of Donne's *Holy Sonnets*? That, without slighting its seriousness, sees the comedy in dying? No? Think again: Margaret Edson, with her firstling effort, has managed it, and more. It is a dazzling and humane play you will remember till your dying day, and especially then, thanks also to a near-flawless production. First, Kathleen Chalfant, a Vivian Bearing of power and vulnerability, commanding intelligence and compelling irony. Add a supporting cast in which all shine. Edson should be handed the Harvard English department. (Simon: 9/28/98.) $35–$49.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 3. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (307-4100).*

Off-Off Broadway

Ben Franklin: Unplugged—A guided tour through the cranium of acclaimed monologuist Josh Kornbluth, with a bit of history about the founding father and inventor tossed in for good measure. $12. Wed.–Sun. at 7:30. Through 1/31. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. (477-5288).*

Bloodletting (A Doctor's Play)—*ER*, the demented version. One surgeon drills too far into an elderly woman's brain, another kills her son and raids his body for organs. Written by (shudder) a real doctor, Michael DiAntonio. $12. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30. *La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (475-7710).*

The Book of Wren—Miranda Theatre Company presents a new play about an abbot who becomes obsessed with the powers of a healer and stops at nothing in order to acquire them. $10–$15. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 1/31. *Miranda Theatre, 259 W. 30th St. (268-9829).*

Caesar and Cleopatra—George Bernard Shaw's depiction of Caesar as a devious and egocentric man. Performed by the Jean Cocteau Rep. $24–$30. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery. (677-0060).*

Desperelics—Alexander Lyras tears through the roles of eight overaccomplished or despairing urban types, all slouching at various rates toward the new millennium. $15. Fri. at Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. *Gene Frankel Theater, 24 Bond St. (505-0099).*

An Evening with Quentin Crisp—The naked civil servant and world-class raconteur returns. $40. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 4. Through 1/31. *Intar Theatre, 420 W. 42nd St. (330-7200).*

Gretty Good Time—A dark comedy set in 1955 about a paralyzed young woman who entertains both a victim of Hiroshima and Ralph Edwards, host of *This Is Your Life,* in her dreams. Presented by the venerable Ensemble Studio Theatre. $12. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Ensemble Studio Theatre, 539 W. 52nd St. (247-4982).*

Human Resources—The newest solo show from Richard Hoehler, the inspired guy behind the Obie-winning *Working Class.* Here, he plays five men struggling for survival in New York City. $25. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 5. *Kaufman Theater, 534 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Lyz!—A modern musical adaptation of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata,* the tale of women who refuse their men sex in order to end a war. $12. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 1/31. *Samuel Beckett Theater, 410 W. 42nd St. (353-7832).*

Monday Night Magic—Internationally known magicians munch on glass, puncture flailing assistants with swords, yank rabbits from hats, etc. $20–$27.50. Mon. at 8. *Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (307-4100).*

The Nature of a Fool—Carl Palmer's autobiographical new play about his quest for his birth parents and his discovery of their love letters. $12. Sun. at 3, Mon. and Tues. at 8. Through 2/15. *Theatre at Holy Cross, 329 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Pastorale—A dark comedy about post-college malaise by short-story writer Deborah Eisenberg. $12 Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 2/7. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Dominick St. (647-0202).*

Prater Violet—A stage adaptation of Christopher Isherwood's coming-of-age story. Presented by Difference Engine and the Culture Project. $30. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *The Salon, 432 E. 91st St. (388-8188).*

Rebel Women—A reprisal of Thomas Babe's acclaimed play about General Sherman's 1864 raid of an Atlanta home. $12. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. (539-8840).*

Sea Marks—Brian Heron and Sara MacDonnell star in this Gardner McKay about a fisherman who struggles between his love for a woman and the sea. $30. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 1/31. *Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. (757-3318).*

Shanghai Moon—Grande dame Charles Busch strikes again—this time as Lady Sylvia Allington, the glamorous wife of a British diplomat who creates mayhem in China by involving herself with a powerful warlord. $15. Wed.–Sun. at 8. Through 2/14. *Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave., bet. 9th and 10th Sts. (254-1109).*

A Slight Case of the Shorts—Louis LaRusso II's new play about Edward G. Robinson's travails with the House Un-American Activities Committee. $12. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Through 1/30. *Chernuchin Theatre, 314 W. 54th St. (581-3044).*

Spray/Oedipussy—Two one-man shows performed in rotating repertory by Mike Albo and Jonathan Ames, respectively, who share in common demented spirits and stiletto-pointed storytelling. Consumerism is the subject of the first; Mum, quite obviously, dominates the second. $12. Call for specific dates and showtimes. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. (477-5288).*

Stuck—A lonely single mother tries to escape her job (at a video store), her life, her one-horse town. Rattlestick Productions presents. $15. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. Through 2/14. *Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl. (627-2556).*

Symphonie Fantastique—Puppeteer Basil Twist dances his fabulous creations around a 500-gallon tank. $25. Tues.–Fri. at 7, Sat. at 2 and 10:30, Sun. at 5. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Dominick St. (647-0202).*

Tilt—The latest music-theater creation from the Talking Band, wherein the fates of two musicians, two business people, and two tiny household Gods are reflected in each other's lives. $12–$15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 5 and 8. *La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (475-7710).*

Wang Dang—An intimate and real-time evening with Tom Noonan & Co., as they re-create the story of a washed-up filmmaker's advances on a couple of undergraduates in a seedy motel. $15. Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7:30 and 10, Sun. at 3. *Paradise Theater, 64 E. 4th St. (253-8107).*

Whoa-Jack!—Buchner's *Woyzeck,* transposed onto the American South. Presented by the Worth Street Theater Company; starring Queen Esther. $12. Fri., Sat., and Mon. at 8, Sun. at 5. Through 2/8. *Tribeca Playhouse, 111 Reade St. (604-4195).*

You Shouldn't Have Told—Anne Thompson-Stretching's long-running drama about what happens to an African-American family when the daughters reveal that they have been sexually molested by their mother's boyfriend. $30. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Chernuchin Theatre, 314 W. 54th St. (279-4200).*

Opening

One-Man Wonders

'Spray' and 'Oedipussy'—two great titles that do not *go great together—will be performed in rotating repertory by Mike Albo and Jonathan Ames, respectively, starting January 28 at P.S. 122. Consumerism is the subject of the first, and Mum, quite obviously, dominates the second; a wise and demented spirit happily infuses them both.*

Photograph by Jack Lonth.

art

Julia Margaret Cameron...Charles Simonds

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Peter Hayes/Geoffrey Swindell—Recent ceramic works by two British artists; through 2/13. Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. (535-5767).

Chris Macdonald—Recent works on paper; through 2/20. Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. (535-8810).

Knox Martin—Recent large-scale abstract paintings that continue the artist's use of overlapping forms and juxtapositions of high-key colors; through 2/28. Gat, 1100 Madison Ave. (327-0441).

Steven McCallum—Recent geometric abstract paintings; through 2/20. Stone, 113 E. 90th St. (987-4997).

Richards Ruben/Seymour Boardman—An exhibition pairing the paintings of the two second-generation Abstract Expressionists; through 3/6. Shapolsky, 152 E. 65th St. (452-1094)).

Ed Ruscha—New paintings from the "Metro Plots" series that continue the artist's interest in urban landscapes and take simplified street maps of Los Angeles as their point of departure; 1/27–2/27. Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. (744-2313).

David Wojnarowicz—Stencil works, map collages, paintings, sculpture, and objects made between 1982 and 1984 by the late artist, whose work is currently the subject of a retrospective at the New Museum of Contemporary Art; through 3/6. Baumgold, 128 E. 72nd St. (861-7338).

57th Street Area

Alexander Calder—A selection of prints, drawings, and gouaches dating from the thirties to the seventies; through 3/6. Sheehan, 20 W. 57th St. (489-3331).

Richard Baker—New still-life paintings; through 2/13. Baker, 20 W. 57th St. (397-6780).

Jennifer Bartlett/Walter Niedermayr—*Rhapsody,* a work from 1975 that was included in the Whitney's 1978 "New Image Painting" exhibition and consists of 987 one-foot-square painted enamel-covered steel plates arranged in rows/Photographs of the French and Italian Alps that continue the artist's earlier investigation of the Dolomite mountains. Through 2/6. Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (980-5454).

Gretna Campbell/Susanna Coffey—Landscape drawings of Maine executed in the fifties/Recent cropped self-portraits;. Through 2/6. De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (262-5050).

Damian Loeb—Paintings that meld disparate images from film, advertising, photojournalism, and other media; through 2/13. Boone, 745 Fifth Ave. (752-2929).

Louis Lozowick—Paintings, drawings, and lithographs from the twenties, thirties, and forties, many of them depicting views of New York; through 2/20. Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. (397-0669).

Joe Naujokas/Diane Brawarsky—Paintings of New York views/Collages on painted surfaces. Through 2/4. Perlow, 41 E. 57th St. (644-7171).

Robert Ryman—New white paintings on linen, cotton, or fiberboard supports; through 2/6. PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (421-3292).

Charles Simonds—Imaginary civilizations constructed from natural clay; through 2/20. Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (245-2888).

Keith Sonnier/Vincent Desiderio—A survey of sculptures dating from 1966 to 1998/Recent figure studies on paper. Through 2/13. Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (541-4900).

Richard Stankiewicz—Gestural ink drawings and three large sculptures made between 1959 and 1962; through 3/6. Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (752-1223).

Talent
Houseplants

You may know him as the creator of that miniature clay civilization in the Whitney Museum's stairwell, but of late, Charles Simonds has also been exploring plants as a kind of organic architecture, like the clay piece below called 'Wilted Towers.' At Joseph Helman Gallery, 20 West 57th Street; through February 20.

Photograph courtesy of the Joseph Helman Gallery.

Not Vital—"Snowballs," an edition of fourteen unique glass sculptures; through 2/20. Baron/Boisanté, 50 W. 57th St. (581-9191).

Lawrence Weiner—New work; through 2/19. Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (977-7160).

William Wood—New paintings whose imagery suggests microcosms of biomorphic forms; through 2/13. Danese, 41 E. 57th St. (223-2227).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Asymptote Architecture—A collaborative installation of 24 flat-screen LCDs and glass armatures by the architects Lise Ann Couture and Hani Rashid of Asymptote Architecture; through 2/20. Taylor/TZ'Art, 470 Broome St. (966-9059).

Peggy Bates—Paintings that evoke the body's experience of water in lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams; through 2/20. Gibson, 568 Broadway (925-1192).

Ellen Berkenblit/Alessandro Pessoli—Recent drawings by both; through 2/13. Kern, 558 Broadway (965-1706).

Anselme Boix-Vives—Paintings that depict a visionary world of harmony by a Spanish artist (1899–1969) who worked as a greengrocer in France before taking up painting at the age of 62; through 2/27. Ross, 568 Broadway (343-2161).

Emilie Benes Brzezinski—Large carved wood sculptures whose forms suggest rushing water; through 2/13. Tenri, 575 Broadway (925-8500).

Inka Essenhigh/Tom Shannon—New paintings of a "world made of plastic material that won't decompose"/Sculpture of a woman suspended by a thin wire. Through 2/13. Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. (343-7300).

Margaret Evangeline—Large-scale works on paper created by inscribing, folding, gridding, taping, and other processes; through 2/6. M-13, 72 Greene St. (925-3007).

Beatrice Findlay—Paintings of abstracted urban landscapes; through 2/27. Ingbar, 568 Broadway (334-1100).

Peter Flaccus—New paintings; through 2/20. Knowlton, 568 Broadway (966-2625).

Alberto Giacometti—A collection of drawings by the sculptor that have not been previously exhibited in the United States; through 2/27. Kent, 67 Prince St. (966-4500).

Caroline Golden/Erik Killi Olsen—Elaborate paintings and sculpture exploring Norse myth by the Norwegian artist/Collages, many of childlike figures, from the series "Those Who Beckon." Through 2/6. Bridgewater/Lustberg, 560 Broadway (941-6355).

Claudia Hart—Recent paintings that depict threatening characters culled from children's literature; through 2/13. Gering, 476 Broome St. (226-8195).

Lisa Hoke—An installation of five hanging screens made with thousands of Day-Glo colored drinking straws encased in resin; through 2/27. Solomon, 172 Mercer St. (941-5777).

Peter Hujar and David Wojnarowicz—Photographs and paintings by two artists from New York who were close friends, and briefly lovers, before dying of AIDS-related illnesses; through 2/9. P.P.O.W., 476 Broome St. (941-8642).

Raeford Liles—Sculptures constructed from Legos; through 2/6. Donahue/Sosinski, 560 Broadway (226-1111).

Tony Matella—Large-scale satirical sculptures; through 2/13. Basilico, 26 Wooster St. (966-1831).

Photography

Picture Parables

Even those who don't care for Julia Margaret Cameron's romantic portraits of Victorians are in favor of Cameron herself. These days, when artists begin mapping out their careers in their early twenties, it's hard not to admire a woman who took up a relatively new, male-dominated medium when she was 48 and a mother of five (she raised in addition five orphaned relatives and a foster child). But Cameron's late start also determined her success. By the time she started taking photographs, in 1863, she had had a larger life than most women: Born in Calcutta in 1815, married to a man almost twice her age, and then living on England's Isle of Wight, a nineteenth-century getaway for artists and poets, she was well versed in literature and painting, moved in sophisticated circles, and had almost certainly seen works by all the important photographers of her day. The body of work she produced in less than twenty years is stylistically of a piece but also innovative for its time in its unusually close-up portraits, dramatic lighting, and avoidance of sharp detail. Cameron's portraits of male intellectuals (Charles Darwin, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Sir John Herschel, and others) made her reputation, but it is her portraits and tableaux of women posed as tragic heroines of classical literature that most clearly demonstrate her belief that her art could reveal the immortality of the human spirit. Those solemn faces and dramatic postures have now been brought together for a traveling exhibition, "Julia Margaret Cameron's Women," which opens at MOMA this week (11 West 53rd Street; January 28–May 4). When seeing these images, and then reading about the actual lives of Cameron's subjects in the accompanying catalogue, what stands out as particularly contemporary is Cameron's occasional casting of ordinary, although exceptionally beautiful, women, such as two of her housemaids, Mary Ann Hillier and Mary Ryan, in roles that elevated their status (Ryan, in an interesting twist of fate, ended up marrying a man who fell in love with Cameron's portrait of her, Henry John Stedman Cotton, who was knighted in 1902, making her Lady Cotton). But the most telling aspect of Cameron's endeavor is that few of her models, almost all of whom were people she knew or was related to, went on to lead happy lives. Her favorite model, her niece and godchild Julia Prinsep Jackson (the mother of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell), endured one family tragedy after another; Cyllena Margaret Wilson, adopted as a child by Cameron, eventually ran away, was married and widowed three times, and died of yellow fever in Argentina in her early thirties. Considering the harsh realities of nineteenth-century life, then, one might say that Cameron's stagey archetypes were simply a more palatable version of the truth. EDITH NEWHALL

Paul McCarthy and Jason Rhoades—A collaborative installation titled *Propposition* that incorporates three video projections, sound, drawings, and a mechanical bull; through 2/13. Zwirner, 43 Greene St. (966-9074).

David Rabinowitch—Recent drawings that depict particular views of trees; through 2/5. Blum, 99 Wooster St. (343-0441).

David Salle—New paintings from the artist's "Glass and Mirror" series that explore reflection, disjunction, and fragmentation through the juxtaposition of narrative elements, through 3/6, at Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. (965-0753), and new paintings depicting angel statuary, performing bears, acrobats, interiors, and still lifes, through 2/27, at Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. (228-2828).

Claire Seidl—Recent abstract paintings, through 2/13, at Rosenberg + Kaufman, 115 Wooster St. (431-4838), and works on paper, at Carr, 478 W. Broadway (673-5518).

Roger Shimomura—A series of 30 paintings based on the diaries of the artist's grandmother, kept while she was a prisoner in internment camps in Washington and Idaho in the forties; through 2/13. Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St. (431-4224).

Jordan Tinker—Works that explore the American fascination with unspoiled wilderness, including copies of nineteenth-century American paintings drawn directly on the gallery's walls and photographic transparencies of American landscapes mounted on light boxes; through 2/27. Brownstone, 39 Wooster St. (334-3455).

Chelsea

Michelle Charles/Miguel Angel Rios—Recent photograms of medicine bottles/A twenty-foot-long map of Manhattan replicating each city block using cut-mirror rectangles and an audio piece comprising all the languages spoken in Manhattan. Through 2/6. Weber, 529 W. 20th St. (691-5711).

Amy Hill—Painted portraits of heavy-metal musicians rendered in the style of Italian and Dutch Renaissance masters; through 2/20. Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. (243-5937).

John Kirchner—Frottage and sculpture constructed from tissue and balsa; through 2/15. Foster, 529 W. 20th St. (966-9024).

Zoe Leonard/Rudolf Stingel—Nature photographs of Alaska and Cape Cod that dramatize the clash between urban development and natural rhythms/Cast-aluminum sculptures of manipulated radiators. Through 2/13. Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. (255-1105).

David Lowe—Paintings in which fragments of Italian landscapes are enclosed in abstract fields of muted color; through 2/20. Coploff, 526 W. 26th St. (741-1149).

Albert Oehlen—New paintings; through 2/27. Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. (206-9100).

Manuel Pardo—Paintings of idealized landscapes in Cuba that draw on the artist's earliest childhood memories of the island; through 3/4. Generous Miracles, 529 W. 20th St. (352-2858).

Alix Pearlstein/Michael Ballou—A video and photographs that continue the artist's investigation into the role of the still picture in the time-based medium of video/Small-scale sculptures of reconfigured plastic toy figures. Through 2/6. Postmasters, 459 W. 19th St. (727-3323).

Peggy Preheim—Pencil drawings, black-and-white photographs, and a cast-silver sculpture; through 2/20. Bonakdar Jancou, 521 W. 21st St. (414-4144).

Scott Reeder—Paintings that use deadpan humor to expose the arbitrary nature of naming things; through 2/27. Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. (727-7366).

Jonathan Seliger/Micah Lexier—Three-dimensional works on canvas using a hat motif/Drawings that investigate the passage of time. Through 2/6. Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. (645-1701).

William Steiger—New paintings that depict water towers, bridges, isolated pieces of industrial machinery, and desolate landscapes; through 2/6. Thatcher, 529 W. 20th St. (675-0222).

Michael Timpson/Ellen Harvey—An installation and photoworks/Paintings based on Polaroid portraits. Through 2/13. Stux, 529 W. 20th St. (352-1600).

Lawrence Weiner—A survey of the artist's posters, drawings, and small printed works; through 2/27. At Bound & Unbound, 601 W. 26th St. (463-7348) and Tonkonow, 601 W. 26th St. (255-8450).

Arnold Zimmerman—New ceramic sculptures; through 2/13. Elder, 529 W. 20th St. (462-2600).

Other

David Wojnarowicz—Early stencils of burning houses, falling men, and running soldiers made between 1981 and 1983 by the late artist, whose work is currently the subject of a retrospective exhibition at the New Museum of Contemporary Art; through 2/27. Mansion, 54 St. Marks Place (505-7055).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

CDS—76 East 79 St. (772-9555). Drawings, paintings, constructions, and sculpture by Latin American artists Aizenberg, Bonevardi, Fonseca, and Gramcko; through 1/31.

Feigen—535 W. 20th St. (929-0500). "Strange Beauty: A Century of Mannerism, 1520–1620." Mannerist paintings and drawings from Italy and the Netherlands by Caravaggio, Pino, Puligo, Vasari, others; 1/29–4/2.

57th Street Area

Rosenfeld—24 W. 57th St. (247-0082). "African-American Art: 20th Century Masterworks, VI," an exhibition of crucial works by artists including Romare Bearden, James VanDerZee, Jacob Lawrence, Bob Thompson, Palmer Hayden, and Hale Woodruff; through 3/6.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Cavin-Morris—560 Broadway (226-3768). "By Any Means Necessary," sculptures by self-taught African-American artists including Steve Ashby,

Photograph by Julia Margaret Cameron, courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art

Kevin Sampson, Henry Sims, and others; and paintings from Sandford Darling's "House of a Thousand Paintings" series; through 2/13.

Exit Art—548 Broadway (966-7745). "Paradise 8," a curatorial experiment in which eight curators will merge initially discrete exhibition zones of works by various artists within the gallery space over a period of three months; through 4/3.

Goldstein—39 Wooster St. (431-0314). Fantastic landscape paintings and photographs by Atfest, Davies, Hopeful, Knopke, Viliger; through 2/20.

Kaplan—48 Greene St. (226-6131). "Oldnewtown," an exhibition of works exploring various environments by Althoff, Farquar, Foerster, Kudo, Mackie, Saville, Webb, Weiner, others; through 2/20.

Kasmin—74 Grand St. (219-3219). Abstract paintings by Fonseca, Hutcheson, McClelland, Moix, Murado, Nares, Puckette, and Schuyff; through 2/13.

Lombard Freid—470 Broome St. (334-5060). "Urban Romantics, Part II," an exhibition of works by six young painters, photographs by Morrisroe, and a sound installation by Ashizuka and Toporowicz; through 2/18.

P.P.O.W.—476 Broome St. (941-8642). "Some Sort of Grace," works by David Wojnarowicz and Peter Hujar; "Fields," works by Margaret Curtis, Jane Fine, and Will Mentor; through 2/6.

Pelavin—13 Jay St. (925-9424). Abstract paintings and works on paper by New York native Carolanna Parlato, and Los Angeles artists Marc Katano and Michael Reafsnyder; through 2/20.

Sperone Westwater—142 Greene St. (431-3685). Gold paintings by the twentieth-century Italian artist Lucio Fontana, alongside gold-background paintings from the fourteenth and fifteenth century; through 2/13.

Chelsea

Art Resources Transfer, Inc.—210 Eleventh Ave. (691-5956). Project wall by Merle Temkin and site-specific installation of paintings and drawings by Steve Diehl, through 1/31; works by Sean Mellyn and Joyce Pensato, through 2/7; paintings and photographs by Emma Amos and Builder Levy, through 2/21; glass sculpture and paintings by Judith Linhares and Lindsay Walt; through 3/14.

Cristinerose—529 W. 20th St. (206-0297). "Cruise Control" an exhibition of works inspired by automobiles by Blair, Dwyer, Fleury, Ladda, Mosher, Mumford, Opie, Rayne, and Woods; through 2/20.

D'Amelio Terras—525 W. 22nd St. (352-9460). Paintings, works on paper, and sculpture from 1960 by Carl Andre, Jasper Johns, Yayoi Kusama, Piero Manzoni, and Frank Stella; through 2/27.

Gladstone—Large-scale works by Alighiero e Boetti, Hanne Darboven, and Sol Lewitt; through 2/9.

Harris—529 W. 20th St. (463-9666). Recent works by emerging artists, Antonson, Childs, Grassie, Ivie, McDonald, Pipman, Stern, Solyrav, others; through 2/6.

Nosei—530 W. 22nd St. (741-8695). Paintings and photographs by four young British artists; through 2/19.

Rare—435 W. 14th St. (645-5591). "Hocus Focus," an exhibition of new video by Henrik Freiberg, Al Hamm, Paul Johnson, Paul Pfeiffer, Sven Påhlsson; through 2/23.

Ricco/Maresca—529 W. 20th St. (627-4819). Folk, self-taught, and outsider art from the collection of Robert M. Greenberg, chairman and CEO of R/GA Digital Studios; through 3/6.

Other

Schomburg Center—515 Malcolm X Blvd. (491-2200). "Black New York Artists of the Twentieth Century," a retrospective including works of 123 artists, including Bearden, Conwill, Douglas, Feelings, Lawrence, Olugebefola, Ringgold, Woodruff, others; through 3/28.

Photography

Bruce Barnbaum—A 25-year survey of works by a photographer best known for his landscapes of the American West; through 2/20. Witkin, 415 W. Broadway (925-5510).

Virginia Beahan & Laura McPhee—Photographs from the collaborators' new book, *No Ordinary Land*; through 2/6. Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. (505-5555).

Keith Carter—New photographs exploring folklore, religion, pop culture, and everyday life; through 3/13. Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (334-0010).

Bruce Cratsley—A complete retrospective of a recently deceased New York artist famous for transforming urban areas into magical spaces; through 2/14. Wessel + O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. (242-8811).

Patrick Demarchelier—New photographs; through 2/27. Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. (274-9300).

William Eggleston—Never-before-seen early color images by a groundbreaking artist whose 1976 exhibition of color photographs at MOMA broke the black-and-white barrier; through 2/27. Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (242-7727).

Gerrit Engel/Jan Staller—Photographs of grain elevators in Buffalo, New York/Recent color landscape photographs. Through 2/27. Saul, 560 Broadway (431-0747).

Elger Esser—The first American exhibition of color photographs by the German artist; through 2/13. Sonnabend, 420 W. Broadway (966-6160).

Neil Folberg—Black-and-white landscape photographs of the Middle East from the artist's recent "Starry Night" series; through 2/20. Klotz, 22 E. 72nd St. (327-2211).

Erika Hubatschek/Franz Hubmann—Pastoral images and vintage prints by two prominent Austrian photographers; through 2/20. Leica, 670 Broadway (777-3051).

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (768-4682), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (voluntary contribution 5–8), Sat. and Sun. 10–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. A photo essay of a Brooklyn teenage gang by Bruce Davidson; through 3/7. . . . "Intimate City: The Photographs of Thomas Roma." Approximately 40 gelatin prints depicting various aspects of New York City life and drawn from five projects that became books, among them *Come Sunday* and *Sunset Park*; through 3/7.

Sy Kattelson—Documentary photographs of New York by a former student of Sid Grossman and Paul Strand; through 3/13. 292, 120 Wooster St. (431-0292).

Laura Larson—Large-scale black and white photographs of period rooms in museums and historic houses; through 2/27. Kirkland, 504 W. 22nd St. (627-3930).

Laura London—Documentary-style photographs of punk-rock chicks and teenage girls that concentrate on their everyday activities; through 2/20. Golden, 39 Wooster St. (274-0080).

Flo Lunn and Cal Rhodes—Collaborative photographs that narrate a travel diary; through 2/28. Wimmer, 560 Broadway (274-0274).

Penny Mailander—Painted black-and-white photographs of often androgynous human figures; through 2/28. Rice, 325 W. 11th St. (366-6660).

Douglas Mellor/Josef Sudek—Black-and-white still lifes and photomontages that arrange antique engravings and against various textured backgrounds/Still lifes from the fifties and sixties by Czech photographer Josef Sudek. Through 2/20. Richardson, 560 Broadway (343-1255).

PaceWildensteinMacGill—32 E. 57th St. (759-7999). Black-and-white images from the fifties by the French fashion photographer Guy Bourdin, and "Cropping and Picture Making," a comparative exhibition of photographs by Kertesz, Man Ray, Weston, and Winogrand; through 3/6.

Barbara Pollack—A conceptual photo-installation responding to Steichen's famous "Family of Man" exhibit; through 3/6. Thread Waxing Space, 476 Broadway (966-9520).

Orit Raff—Close-up shots of everyday objects that are predominantly gray and white; through 2/13. Silverstein, 520 W. 21st St. (929-4300).

Ricco/Marcesca—529 W. 20th St. (627-4819). Nude photographs of the human figure by Bidaut, Carucci, Slota, Von Bruenchenheim, others; through 3/6.

Victor Schrager—Recent aviary photographs and still lifes; through 3/6. Houk, 745 Fifth Ave. (750-7070).

Beverly Semmes—Recent photographs by an artist who manipulates costumes and strange landscapes to interrogate images of female bodies; through 2/13. Inglett, 100 Wooster St. (343-0573).

Sandy Skoglund—An installation photograph that playfully integrates jelly beans and thousands of brightly colored silk and Mylar butterflies; through 2/13. Borden, 560 Broadway (431-0166).

Erik Steffensen—Photographs by the Danish artist; through 3/6. DCA, 525 W. 22nd St. (255-5511).

Rolf Tietgens—Surrealist photographs executed in the late thirties; through 3/20. De Lellis, 47 E. 68th St. (327-1482).

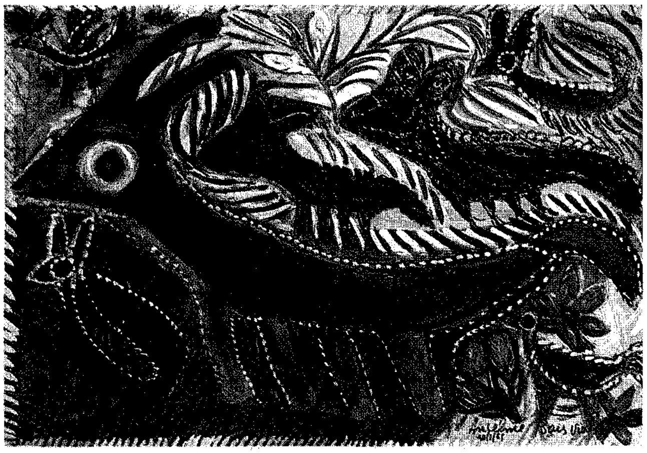
Ubu—16 E. 78th St. (794-4444). "The Photogram: 1918–1948," a survey of the photographic process featuring works by Lissitzky, Man Ray, Moholy-Nagy, Schad, others; through 3/6.

Frank Yamrus—Black-and-white photographs capturing the motion of nude figures in water; through 3/6. Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave. (242-7767).

Museums

American Craft Museum—"Rörstrand: Swedish Art Nouveau Porcelain From the Schreiber Collection." A rare collection of porcelain produced by Sweden's Rörstrand factory, Europe's second-oldest operating ceramics firm; through 5/23. . . . "Art and Industry: 20th-Century Porcelain From Sèvres." Recent works in porcelain by 40 international artists, architects, and designers created at the Sèvres factory in France; through 5/2. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10–6, Thurs. till 8 (pay as you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"Papua New Guinea: Arts and Spirits, Photographs From the Middle Sepik River, 1953–54." Color and black-



On View Anselme Boix-Vives (1899–1969), a Spanish greengrocer living in France, taught himself to paint at the age of 62 in order to create images that would eradicate war from the earth. His strategy may have failed, but his paintings of gentle animals, fantastic flora, and starry skies still inspire peaceful thoughts. At Luise Ross Gallery, 568 Broadway, at Prince Street; through February 27.

Photograph courtesy of the Luise Ross Gallery.

and-white photographs of Papua New Guinea's indigenous species, art, architecture, and people, taken by Museum ornithologist E. Thomas Gilliard during his 1953–54 expedition; through 3/28. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Japonism in Fashion: Japan Dresses the West." An exhibit exploring the influence of Japanese art and design on Western fashion through more than 70 costumes and accessories dating from the second half of the nineteenth century to the present; through 2/14. . . . "Lewis Wickes Hine: The Final Years." 110 photographs of New York, only ten of which have been seen by the public, including images documenting the construction of the Empire State Building, the arrival of immigrants at Ellis Island, and workers in mills and factories; through 4/4. . . . "Domestic Transformations: Working in Brooklyn." Wallpaper, carpets, furniture, and ceramic tiles by Brooklyn-based artists Ann Agee, Jean Blackburn, Ron Baron, and Andy Yoder; through 3/14. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–9 (museum open until 11 P.M. on the first Saturday of every month), Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution—"Unlimited by Design." An exhibition focusing on products, services, and environments designed to meet the needs of people throughout their lives; through 3/21. . . . 2 E. 91st St. (849-8300), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5, Tues. 10–9 (free admission 5–9); $5, $3 seniors and students.

Dahesh Museum—"A Victorian Salon: Paintings From the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Bournemouth, England." Thirty-five nineteenth-century paintings collected by the British hotelier Merton Russell-Cotes (1835–1921), among them works by Edwin Landseer, Edwin Long, Albert Moore, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti; through 4/17. 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (759-0606), Tues.–Sat. 11–6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Andy Warhol: Shadows." A work that made in 1978 composed of more than 100 silk-screened and hand-painted panels; through 6/13. . . . "Thomas Schütte: Scenewright." Early installations, small-scale modeled figures, proposals for monuments, watercolors, and photographs by the German artist; through 6/13. . . . "Joseph Beuys: Drawings After the Codices Madrid of Leonardo da Vinci, and Sculpture." Works from Dia's permanent collection, including 96 drawings made in response to two sketchbooks by Leonardo da Vinci, and sculptures; through 6/13. . . . "Robert Irwin: *Excursus: Homage to the Square 3*." The second part of a site-specific installation by the California artist; through 6/13. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5566), Thurs.–Sun. 12–6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Drawing Center—"Selections Winter '99." Drawings by Paul Morrison, Perry Roberts, and Richard Wright; through 2/6. 35 Wooster St. (219-2166), Tues.–Fri. 10–6, Sat. 11–6; donation suggested.

El Museo del Barrio—"The Art of Jack Delano." Documentary photographs of interiors, people, and landscapes contributed by the artist to the Farm Security Administration during the thirties; through 2/28. . . . "Domino/Dominó: A Mixed-Media Installation by Bibiana Suárez"; through 2/7. . . . "Gods, Spirits, and Legends: Twentieth-Century Art in El Salvador." The first thematic show of paintings from El Salvador in the United States, featuring 40 works by 17 artists born between 1900 and 1960; through 2/28. . . . "Casitas: Gardens of Reclamation." Large-scale photographs of casitas, small structures built by Puerto Rican immigrants in vacant lots and gardens throughout New York City; through 2/28. 1230 Fifth Ave. (831-7272), Wed.–Sun. 11–5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Frick Collection—"Drouais' Portrait of Madame de Pompadour From the National Gallery, London." François-Hubert Drouais's celebrated full-length portrait of Madame de Pompadour; through 4/25. 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery—"First Steps II: Emerging Artists From Japan." Recent works in diverse media by seven Japanese artists; 1/27–2/20. New York University, 100 Washington Square East (998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11–6, Wed. 11–8, Sat. 11–5; donation suggested.

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat. from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $7 seniors and students.

Hispanic Society of America—"Images for the Spanish Monarchy: Art and the State, 1516–1700." Paintings, illuminated manuscripts, rare books, prints, and medals that were made during the reign of the Hapsburg family; through 2/21. 613 W. 155th St. (926-2234), Tues. Sat. 10–4:30, Sun. 1–4; free.

Jewish Museum—"Common Man, Mythic Vision: The Paintings of Ben Shahn." The first major museum exhibit of the artist's paintings since 1976, comprising works made by the artist between 1936 and 1965; through 3/7. . . . 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 free); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Dosso Dossi, Court Painter in Renaissance Ferrara." Paintings by the sixteenth-century Italian artist, who worked in Ferrara; through 3/28. . . . "Anselm Kiefer: Works on Paper, 1969–1993." A selection of works on paper that offer an overview of the ideas and themes of the first two decades of the German painter's career; through 3/21. . . . "Cubism and Fashion." Cubism-influenced clothing by Madeleine Vionnet, Callot Soeurs, and Gabrielle Chanel, as well as examples of contemporary fashion; through 3/14. . . . "Eighteenth-Century French Drawings in New York Collections." Works on loan from private collections and public institutions in New York City; 2/2–4/25. . . . "Charles Burchfield From the Collection." Watercolors, paintings, and prints created between 1915 and 1963; through 2/28. . . . "Jade in Ancient Costa Rica." Pendants, mace heads, ear ornaments, beads, and other objects carved from jade in Costa Rica between 300 B.C. and A.D. 700; through 2/28. . . . "Louis Comfort Tiffany at the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Decorative art objects drawn from the museum's holdings, including leaded-glass windows and lamps, blown-glass vases, furniture, metalwork, enamels, and jewelry; through 1/31. . . . "Félix Vallaton: Woodcuts and Three Paintings." Woodcuts from the 1890s paintings from the 1920s by a Swiss artist who worked in France; through 2/21. . . . "Clay Into Art: Selections From the Collection of Contemporary Ceramics"; through 5/30. . . . "The Academy of the Sword: Illustrated Fencing Books, 1500–1800." More than 25 rare books accompanied by swords, daggers, shields, and gauntlets from the museum's collection; through 8/30. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $8 contribution, $4 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $8, $4 seniors and students.

Museum of American Folk Art—"Nellie Mae Rowe: Ninety-Nine-and-a-Half Won't Do." The first major retrospective of paintings by the self-taught African-American artist; through 5/2. Lincoln Square (595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Jewish Heritage—"ORTworks: Modernizing Jewish Labor in the Early 20th Century." Rare photographs of Jewish beekeepers, seamstresses, blacksmiths, and other workers who received vocational and agricultural training from ORT (Organization for Rehabilitation through Training) programs from the twenties through the forties; through 2/11. 18 First Place, Battery Park City (968-1800), Sun.–Wed. and Fri. 9–5, Thurs. 9–8, eve of Jewish holidays 9–2, closed Sat. and Jewish holidays; $7, $5 students and seniors.

Museum of Modern Art—"Jackson Pollock." The first retrospective of the Abstract Expressionist's work since the one mounted by the Museum of Modern Art in 1967; through 2/2. . . . "Focus: Pollock and Printmaking." A selection of prints by Jackson Pollock from the museum's collection; through 2/2. . . . "Julia Margaret Cameron's Women." Portraits of women by the nineteenth-century British photographer; through 5/4. . . . "Dubuffet to de Kooning: Expressionist Prints From Europe and America"; through 2/2. . . . "Miró's Black and Red Series: A New Acquisition in Context." The eight etchings of Joan Miró's 1938 Black and Red series, as well as 150 prints, illustrated books, drawings, posters, photographs, paintings, and sculptures by Miró and his contemporaries; through 2/2..."Site Gags: Humor, Satire, and Grotesque in Modern and Contemporary Drawings." Works on paper from the museum's collection, including satirical sketches, grotesques, straight comic illustrations, and visual puns; through 5/4. . . . 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 10:30–6, Thurs. 10:30–6, Fri. 10:30–8:30 (4:30–8:30 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $9.50, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"The Little Apple: Souvenir Buildings From the Collection of Ace Architects." A selection of miniature models of New York buildings created over the past 100 years; through 3/28. . . . "New York Horizontal: Cirkut Camera Views by William Hassler." Thirty rare panoramic views of WWI-era New York; through 5/2. . . . "New York Vertical by Horst Hamman." Photographs that emphasize the verticality of New York's skyscrapers; through 4/18. . . . "New York on the Rise: Architectural Renderings by Hughson Hawley"; through 4/4. . . . "Landscapes of Hope: Rebuilding New York City's Neighborhoods." Photographs by Larry Racioppo documenting the rebuilding of various New York City neighborhoods; through 6/27. . . . "Broadway! The Great White Way in 1898." Photographs, costumes, manuscripts, and other memorabilia of New York's theater district of the 1890s; through 1/31. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; suggested contribution $5, $3 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology—"Shoes: A Lexicon of Style." More than 100 pairs of women's shoes, among them twenties pumps by André Perugia, fifties stilettos by Roger Vivier, and seventies platform sandals by Charles Jourdan; through 4/17. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-7642), Tues.–Fri. 12–8, Sat. 10–5; free.

National Academy of Design and School of Fine Arts—"Treasures Revealed: Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century American Works on Paper From the Collection of the National Academy." Drawings, prints, watercolors, and pastels by Kenyon Cox, Thomas Moran, Paul Landacre, William Trost Richards, and others; through 3/7. 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (369-4880), Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. 12–5, Fri., 12–8 (Fri. 5–8 pay what you wish); $8, $5 seniors and students.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Fever: The Art of David Wojnarowicz." The first retrospective of the work of the East Village artist who died of AIDS in 1992; through 6/20. . . . "Anaida Hernandez: Juegos Ilegales/Illegal Games." Large-scale casino-like games created with interactive installations, paintings, and objects; through 4/11. 583 Broadway (219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12–6, Thurs., Fri., and Sat. 12–8, (free Thurs. 6–8); $5, $3 students, artists, and seniors, free for youths 18 and under.

New York Public Library—"*In thy map securely saile*: Maps, Atlases, Charts, and Globes From the Lawrence H. Slaughter Collection, Map Division." Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century works that were donated to the library's Map Division in 1997 by the estate of Lawrence H. Slaughter; through 3/20. . . . Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

New-York Historical Society—"Treasures From Mount Vernon: George Washington Revealed." A rare collection of Washington items that have never been exhibited outside Mount Vernon, among them his letters, his camp bed used during the Revolutionary War, his pistol and four swords, and a variety of personal objects; through 2/22. . . . "George B. Post: Great American Architect." Architectural renderings of some of New York's landmark buildings and early skyscrapers by an ar-

Abramsky *continued from page 27*

needed six months to catalogue and remove vulnerable artwork stored in an adjacent building. Demonstrators took to the streets wearing devil costumes and waving signs that called developer Emanuel Stern a devil. In front of the hotel, they chanted, "Go back to New Jersey, go back to New Jersey."

Eventually, Stern offered to donate 5,000 square feet of land on Grand Street to the community to install a park. But Freed and her supporters rejected the compromise. To their chagrin, the courts found that the proposed business met local zoning requirements. The SoHo Grand opened in 1996, and nobody got a park. Stern is now building a second hotel, in TriBeCa. And he hasn't heard any complaints. Yet.

OTHER MATTERS ARE CONSUMING Kathryn Freed these days. In Little Italy, residents grouped together last spring to form the Little Italy Neighbors Association. In October, the newly opened Café Habana had a liquor-license request turned down after the association said it objected to the owner. There was opposition from both the local community board and Councilwoman Freed.

Visual artist Sante Scardillo, one of the founders of the association, is now campaigning against the M&R Bar–Dining Room, which operates out of the building on Elizabeth Street that he lives in. Says Scardillo, "They have an outdoor garden. It's a sound trap, especially in the summer when people keep their windows open. I'm a lot more sensitive since I had this in my backyard." Since Scardillo's group began asserting itself, Community Board Two has adopted a policy opposing all restaurant gardens.

There's more. With the SoHo Alliance, a local organization founded with Freed's support in the early eighties, Freed has launched a vigorous campaign to clear the streets of the street-vending artists who have sold their wares in this part of town for more than twenty years—undercutting the established, rent-paying businesses.

Gallery owners are angry at the food wholesalers who double-park delivery vans and stack produce outside. Freed wants existing laws that state the produce must be stacked inside to be enforced.

A 400-car parking lot has been proposed for the corner of Thompson and Broome Streets, and Freed is against it. "I can't imagine bringing more cars into that area," she says. With a group called Trees Not Trucks, she is agitating to remove commercial trucks from Broome Street.

She has also declared war on air pollution in her district: "My next big campaign, if I get around to it, is to sue the city or state government to improve the lousy air standards in SoHo and TriBeCa." And she's allied herself with the NoHo Neighborhood Association to strip the oversize billboards from Houston Street, Broome Street, and Hudson Square. "On Houston between Broadway and Crosby, there's one for cigarettes," she says. "It's the kind of billboard you see out in Middle America by the superhighways. They're all over New York now. Most are illegal."

Says attorney Norman Marcus, who considers himself a fan, "She argues like a longshoreman. She's very difficult, but she does a fabulous job." To many, she is a slightly eccentric local heroine; to others, her politics are less benign. "It's silly to be anti-commercial," says one local bar owner. "SoHo couldn't be cobblestoned, tree-lined, charming, if there weren't companies here that contribute and pay taxes."

Then there's the matter of Freed's occasionally migraine-inducing manner. "Well, we're all so hidebound in this city," she says, "you almost have to blow up to get people to move."

ANOTHER OF FREED'S CONFRÈRES IS SoHo Alliance leader Sean Sweeney, whose group hired Jack Lester to oppose two high-rise residential developments open to non-artists and planned for the south side of Houston Street. The Alliance wants the developer to obey current zoning laws for the district and build a five- or six-story building with loft spaces rentable only to artists in this strip of land stretching from Wooster to Greene to Mercer Streets. So far, the campaign has cost the Alliance $30,000.

Twenty years ago, Sweeney worked in one of SoHo's original discos, the Loft, which Kathryn Freed and her group—then known as the Artists' Association—tried to have shut down. He was the manager. "It was a different time and place back then," says Sweeney. "We were all age 25."

Sweeney always had an activist streak. He was at the first Human Be-In in 1967 at Kennedy airport. He was at Abbie Hoffman's Grand Central Station Be-In when the police charged in and began beating up the crowd. (Sweeney escaped. "I wasn't a hero," he says.) Later that year, he was Maced by police in Chicago's Lincoln Park, where he was protesting the Vietnam War at the Democratic National Convention. In the seventies, in support of the Irish republican movement, he helped organize a daily picket outside the British Embassy that lasted for ten years. He eventually became a partner at the Loft, but only after it moved to the *(continued on page 87)*

chitect (1837–1913) who was instrumental in the birth of the skyscraper; through 2/14. . . . "New York's Finest: A History of the New York City Police Department." Photographs, newspapers, weapons, uniforms, and crime detection equipment; through 3/21. . . . 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Tues.–Sun. 11–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center—"Cities on the Move 3." Works by artists, architects, and urbanists exploring the effects of modernization, globalization, introduction of new technologies, and the explosive population growth in Asian cities; through 1/31. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave. (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $5 suggested donation.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"The Wormsley Library: A Personal Selection by Sir Paul Getty, K. B. E." Illuminated manuscripts, fine printed books, historic bookbindings, and other works from the Wormsley Library in England; 1/27–5/2. . . . "Master Drawings Recently Acquired"; through 5/6. . . . "Poe: The Ardent Imagination." A selection of letters, manuscripts, and rare printed editions; through 5/9. . . . "Detectives, Private Eyes, and Spies." Early editions of works by Ambler, Childers, Poe, and others; through 5/5. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008), Tues.–Thurs. 10:30–5, Fri. 10–8, Sat. 10:30–6; Sun. 12–6; $7; $5 students and seniors.

Queens Museum of Art—"Life Cycles: The Charles E. Burchfield Collection." A selection of of the artist's watercolors, works on paper, lithographs, and paintings from the Burchfield-Penney Center in Buffalo; 1/27–3/21. . . . "Before the Lens: Images of the Imagemakers From the Charles Schwartz Collection." Photographs of Louis-Jacques Mandé Daguerre, Nadar, William Henry Fox Talbot, and other well-known photographers taken by famous and anonymous photographers; 1/27–3/21. New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 12–5; $3, $1.50 students and seniors.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"From the Studio: Artists in Residence 1997–1998." Works created over the past year by Sheila Batiste, Brett Cook-Dizney, and Julio Valdez during their yearlong tenure with the Studio Museum in Harlem's Art-in-Residence Program; through 2/28. 144 W. 125th St. (864-4500).

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Ray Johnson: Correspondences." Selections from five decades of work by the collagist and mail artist (1927–95); through 3/21. . . . "Duane Hanson: A Survey of His Work From the 30s to the 90s." A retrospective of works by the sculptor (1925–1996) known for his life-size, realistic renderings of ordinary people; through 2/28. . . . "Hindsight: Recent Work From the Permanent Collection"; through 2/21. . . . "Gary Hill: Circular Breathing." Five large-scale black-and-white video projections; through 3/21. . . . "Pale Guide to Transparent Things." A related group of photographic works by Seton Smith; through 4/4. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8 (6–8 pay what you wish); $9, $7 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8).

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"The Long Twilight: An Installation by Lynne Yamamoto." An installation that evokes aspects of the life of a young Japanese women who disappeared mysteriously in the thirties, by presenting a collection of her personal belongings; 1/29–4/23. 120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550); Mon.–Fri. 11–6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's—502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (546-1119). 1/29 at 10: "Important Master Paintings." On view from 1/23.

Doyle—175 E. 87th St. (427-2730). 1/27 at 10: "Important English and Continental Furniture and Decorations." On view from 1/23.

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave. at 72nd St. (606-7000). 1/27 at 10:15 and 2: "Old Master Drawings and Paintings." 1/28/99 at 10:15 and 2: "Old Master Paintings." On view from 1/23. 1/29 at 10:15 and 2: "European Paintings." On view from 1/23.

Swann Galleries—104 E. 25th St. (254-4710). 1/28 at 2:30 and 6: "Posters." On view from 1/25.

restaurants

Seafood Special...Buried Treasure...Vandam

Manhattan

Lower New York

Alison on Dominick—An impeccably turned-out room with blue banquettes and tender lighting. Perfectionist owner Alison Becker Hurt makes sure that all is well. *38 Dominick St., nr. Hudson St. (727-1188). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (406-2292). (I) ($).*

Can—This elegant SoHo canteen for the hip and the stylish excels in Asian seafood concoctions like hot-pot salmon, South Sea prawns, and seafood paradise, a mélange of lobster, clams, and scallops with a mild black-bean sauce. *482 W. Broadway (533-6333). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Opening
Bière Here

In an intriguing international twist, the latest avatar of the Belgian-food fad is a stateside branch of a London company serving Canadian mussels by the kilo. Go figure. Belgo Nieuw-York, opening Thursday, is most famous abroad for its selection of 101 Belgian beers, some of which are incorporated into dishes like cheese-and-beer croquettes, honey-beer-marinated gravlax, duck confit with black-currant-beer sauce, and fish and chips in a white-beer batter. (415 Lafayette Street; 253-2828.)

Photograph by Robert Wright.

The Cub Room—Fighting back from the scorching bar scene his restaurant became last summer, chef-owner Henry Meer (from Lutèce)—doing penance for the butter and cream of the past—is dishing up contemporary American fare to an impossibly diverse crowd. Yes, that was Ethan Hawke. *131 Sullivan St., at Prince St. (677-4100). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Diva—Another hip spot at the nexus of a hip neighborhood, with Italian specialties like homemade gnocchi and lobster-stuffed black ravioli. Iron candelabras and scarlet walls set the perfect sexy downtown mood. *341 W. Broadway, nr. Broome St. (941-9024). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Layla—A Middle Eastern feast, complete with gyrating belly dancer, brought to you by Drew Nieporent and his TriBeCa production team. Menu highlights include crabmeat phyllo, cinnamon-braised lamb shank with okra, and toasted couscous and almond ice milk. *211 W. Broadway, at Franklin St. (431-0700). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has arrived in TriBeCa. And New Yorkers haven't tasted Japanese cooking like this—unless, of course, they've visited Matsuhisa's restaurant in L.A. *105 Hudson St. (219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

The Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (274-8883). Also, 240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Pierino—An Italian dining room full of businesspeople and city politicians for lunch and dinner for the bankers on their way uptown offering meta-traditional dishes like lobster and steak. Yes, that was Peter Vallone. *107 Reade St. (513-0610). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place.

Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Provence—Lots of people have got engaged in the charming garden at this authentic country French restaurant; even more have sampled the bourride, bouillabaisse, and bass flambé. If you can't actually make it to the Côte d'Azur, this is the next best thing. *38 MacDougal St. (475-7500). (M–E) AE.*

Raoul's—The dull roar in this cavelike bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a heartwarming sound. *180 Prince St., nr. Thompson St. (966-3518). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Salaam Bombay—A far cry from the curry canteens of 6th Street, this Indian restaurant is a good alternative to TriBeCa's medley of French and Italian standbys. Marble floors and a canopy above each table decorate the dining room. Regional specialties from all corners of the country include dahi batata poori from Bombay, khaman dhokla from Gujarat, and lamb pasanda from Kashmir. *317 Greenwich St. (226-9400). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—Chef Michael Lomonaco, formerly of the '21' Club, has landed at this landmark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His new menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including skillet-roasted bluepoint oysters with sweet shallot-caviar cream; open raviolo of forest mushrooms, pumpkin, and sage; and Maine lobster with truffles, root vegetables, and buttermilk biscuits. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's superlative wine cellar. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

South Street Seaport

Harbor Lights—Comfort food in elegant French-ish environs with a breathtaking view of three bridges. *Pier 17, third floor (227-2800). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

North Star Pub—Stocked like a London pub, frequented by Wall Streeters and homesick tourists. Fish and chips and bangers and mash just about as close as you'll get to the real thing. *93 South St. (509-6757). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while waiters manage to carry a tune *and* serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. Late-night dining too. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Haveli—Haveli distinguishes itself from the Sixth Street strip, for its food as much as its upscale decor. Possibly the only East Village restaurant with an *intentionally* shattered windowpane. *100 Second Ave., nr. 6th St. (982-0533). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Miracle Grill—One of the earliest pioneers on the East Village dining scene, this comfortable Mexican cantina is especially welcoming in warm weather, when the garden is a serene urban oasis. The grilled-vegetable plate surpasses most. *112 First Ave., nr. 7th St. (254-2353). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (645-4525). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Three of Cups—Proving that the East Village has room enough for another wood-burning oven pizza parlor besides Two Boots. The "mickey," a charred spud dripping with butter, shouldn't be missed. *83 First Ave., at 5th St. (388-0059). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Andalousia—This relatively undiscovered Village Moroccan rightly prides itself on its roster of tagines and couscous specials. B'stilla is a standout. *28 Cornelia St. (929-3693). (I) MC, V.*

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Da Silvano—Trattoria with tables out front converts this thoroughfare into a people promenade. Great food and views of the local color. Yes, that was Anna Wintour. *260 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-2343). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Greenwich Cafe—This Village café, with its plush antique wing chairs and rococo mirrors, has a loungy feel and is open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Representative items include crab cakes with lobster sauce and fennel tempura, grilled salmon with jasmine rice, and a veggie burger with minted couscous. No cover for the jazz brunch. *75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; French doors open out onto warm evenings. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Le Zoo—A West Village hot spot, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en croute, and cassoulet. *314 W. 11th St. (620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.*

One if by Land, Two if by Sea—Elegant Village restaurant situated within an eighteenth-century carriage house previously owned by Aaron Burr. Four fireplaces and nightly piano music enhance a fine menu of American specialties like beef Wellington. *17 Barrow St. (228-0822). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot invented by Charles Palmer and designer Fernando Saralegui, but the food is all very twentieth-century: crispy shrimp cocktail, cod-and-salmon cakes, veal stew, an exciting cheese course. *36 E. 22nd St. (228-4399). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

An American Place—This venerable midtown spot is to New York as Chez Panisse is to Berkeley. With his eclectic American menu, Larry Forgione made the national cuisine interesting again. *2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (684-2122). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. We *love* the white-peach sangría. *23 E. 22nd St. (228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Campagna—The *Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Candela—A soaring space just off Union Square with medieval-theme décor and a contemporary American menu. Seared yellowfin tuna, braised lamb shank, and the random Asian influence as epitomized by the spicy chicken wontons indicate the chef's range. Light bites and a range of wines can be had at the already-buzzing bar. *116 E. 16th St. (254-1600). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, dependable establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American standout doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th St. (481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Halles—Even though it hasn't been around forever, this utterly perfect re-creation of a Left Bank bistro seems like it has. This is the place to come for onion soup, steak-frites, celeri rémoulade, crème caramel—that sort of thing. *411 Park Ave. So., bet. 28th and 29th Sts. (679-4111). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Medusa—A lot of thought went into the décor at this new restaurant: The floors and bar are red travertine marble, and decorative ironwork details the sconces and door frames. The au courant Mediterranean menu includes such specialties as poppy-seed-encrusted tuna with lime sauce and rack of lamb with Chianti and grilled golden apples. *239 Park Avenue South, nr. 19th St. (477-1500). (M) AE, MC, V.*

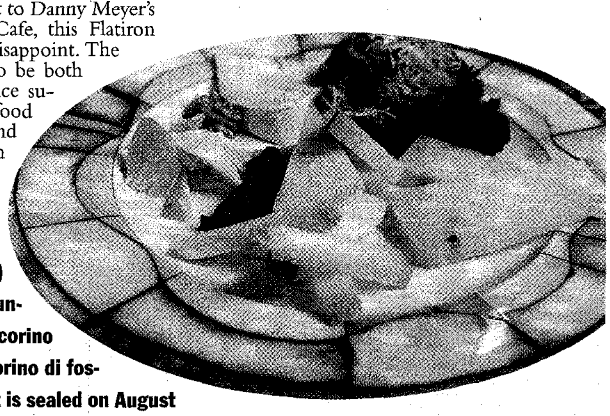
Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Metronome—One of the biggest in a neighborhood known for cavernous dining. The Deco theme and American kitchen are pleasing. *915 Broadway, at 21st St. (505-7400). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oyster Bar—When a fire temporarily shuttered this Manhattan landmark, its long-faithful clientele were bereft, unsure of what to do with themselves at lunchtime. The doors have reopened, the vaulted ceilings have been (for the most part) repaired, and the regulars are taking their places at the counter. Famous for its 25 varieties of oysters, extensive wine selection, and comprehensive seafood preparations, the restaurant is a magnet for commuters and tourists alike. *Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (490-6650). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.*

Park Bistro—Provençal offerings prepared and served with notable agility in an intimate—sometimes crowded—setting. *414 Park Ave. at 28th St. (689-1360). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*



Tasting **Alessandro Giuntoli, the Tuscan-born chef at Osteria del Circo, is now offering a "vertical tasting" of the classic Italian pecorino (sheep's milk) cheeses. Alongside the typical aged pecorinos that are challengingly, but not unpleasantly, sharp, Giuntoli has found a sweet and creamy ten-day-old fresh pecorino from the hill town of Mugello as well as the crème de la crème, the prized pecorino di fossa, which is aged in a communal subterranean pit where, by ancient tradition, it is sealed on August 16 and disinterred three months later. While underground, it ages under the pressure of a heavy stone that helps to extract sharp enzymes, resulting in a light, crumbly, nutty cheese that cries out for some chilled vin santo and a garnish of walnuts, honey, and fresh grapes. (120 West 55th Street; 265-3636.)**

PETER KAMINSKY

Photograph by Liz Steger.

Piccolino—A country-style Italian restaurant offering homemade pastas and thin-crust pizzas in a peach stucco duplex. (The building is a century old.) Worth trying are the risotto pescatore, shrimp-pesto pizza, and veal quattroformaggio. *8 E. 36th St. (683-6444). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *21 E. 16th St. (243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Water Club—This romantic spot overlooking the East River is a favorite for formal affairs, but even your average demanding New York diner would be happy with the American menu and the airy, yacht club–like setting. As to be expected in this nautical environment, there's a heavy emphasis on seafood like lobster and soft-shell crabs, and a massive spread for Sunday brunch. Jackets suggested in the main dining room. *F.D.R. Drive via 23rd St. (683-3333). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Ben's Kosher Delicatessen—This casual delicatessen—the Art Deco–ish Manhattan offshoot of a Long Island chain—brings a full roster of pastrami, corned beef, sour pickles, potato latkes, and other highlights of kosher cooking to the garment district. All baking is done on the premises, and for those who hanker for something a little stronger than Dr. Brown's, there's a full bar. *209 W. 38th St. (398-2367). (I) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Bryant Park Grill—This long-awaited restaurant on the edge of the city's prettiest pocket park has been mobbed from day one. Go at an off-hour for Caesar salad, New York steak, soft-shell crabs, and scallion pancakes. *40th St., between Fifth and Sixth Aves. (840-6500). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Caffe Bondí Ristorante—Popular with the photographers who work in the Flatiron district and foodies from all over who fill the garden in warm weather. Specializes in Sicilian dishes like coniglio alla stimparata, pasta con sarde, and cassata Siciliana. Open seven days a week, including weekend brunch. *7 W. 20th St. (691-8136). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Le Madri—This Chelsea mainstay has long enjoyed a reputation for informality and flavorful Italian fare. The garden is a wonderful warm-weather spot for a light lunch of salad and pasta or a more substantial repast like osso buco with gremolata or risotto with lemon and zucchini. *168 W. 18th St. (727-8022). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner, which could be a hearty serving of filet mignon or Chilean sea bass, topped off with cheesecake, our city's major contribution to the confectionery world. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten, during which time you'll dine and dance to the music of a live band. Jacket required. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Bice—It's always buzzing at this midtown Italian hot spot, where the fashionable crowd takes a hiatus from air-kissing to partake of dishes like lobster salad with baby vegetables, porcini risotto, and veal chop Milanese. *7 E. 54th St. (688-1999). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Caviar Russe—The owners of this caviar bar and boutique are also importers, which means that you're getting your Beluga—and golden Osetra, and Sevruga—right from the source. The petite restaurant ensconced in a midtown townhouse will gladly feed you a spoonful or a more substantial meal, like a foie gras sandwich with Armagnac-soaked figs, or steak tartare with baby-beet-and-black-truffle salad. Afternoon tea and prix fixe menus also available. *538 Madison Ave., nr. 54th St. (980-5908). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Divine Bar—This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can often be found, unwinding. The eclectic menu includes smoked-duck-breast bruschetta and chocolate fondue with fruit. *244 E. 51st St. (319-9463). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Moscow Restaurant & Cabaret—This Russian theme restaurant melds art, food, and entertainment in a three-story celebration of the homeland. Downstairs, folk singers perform in the rustic Cabaret, decorated with the owner's enormous horseshoe collection. Upstairs, massive sculptures and paintings dominate the Gallery Bar and the Russian Room, where diners can partake of house specialties like Siberian pelmeni, chicken Kiev, and blini with Beluga caviar. *137 E. 55th St. (813-1313). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Shinbashi—After nearly a quarter of a century, this elegant Japanese restaurant is still an oasis in the frenzy of midtown. Owner Fumiko Hosoda offers a traditional menu of tempura, sukiyaki, teriyaki, and sushi, plus an array of chef's specialties. *280 Park Ave., at 48th St. (661-3915). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Sutton Place—This sports bar–restaurant on a stretch of Second Avenue saturated with them aims to distinguish itself with a dozen television monitors (and four projection screens), a fireplace, and a skylight upstairs in the tucked-away back room. The food is the familiar blend of Franco-Italian-American, ranging from burgers and pizza to chicken francese, or shrimp and arugula in vodka sauce. *1015 Second Ave., nr. 53rd St. (207-3777). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

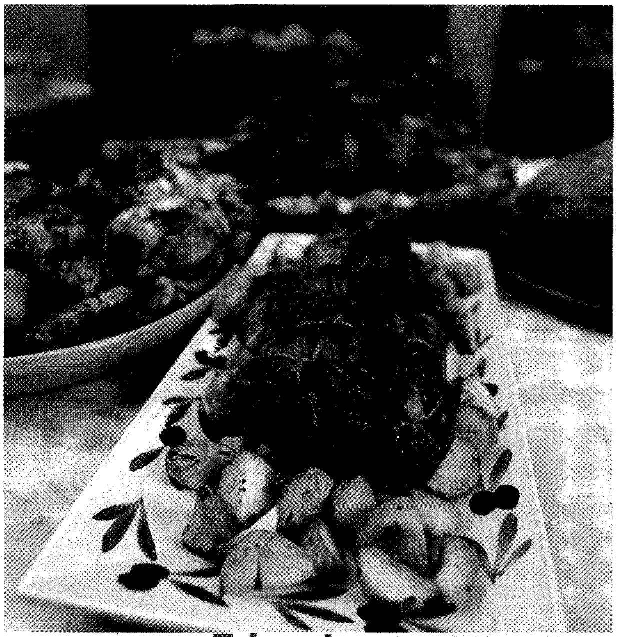
Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, cherubs, jazz onstage, and New American cuisine. Executive chef Neal Myers has a flair with meats and creatively prepared seafood, like pepper-crusted tuna with black bean-and-mango sauce, and crab cakes accompanied by cole slaw rolls. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne—After extensive renovations, the elegant American restaurant in this posh midtown hotel reopens with a new look and a new, sophisticated menu. A few of the more notable entrées include a grilled turbot "chop" with cèpe jus, organic chicken en cocotte with morels and fava beans, and coriander-and-black-pepper-crusted rack of lamb from Jameson Farms. *700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula (903-3918). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking with dinner after 5 P.M. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's Steak House—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is entirely devoted to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*



Takeout Game Hens

Even the most demoralized Jets fans have reason to celebrate this Sunday, thanks to Campagna Home's succulent Super Bowl menu. Overstuffed Italian heros, Cuban sandwiches, cheesy gratin dauphinoise, Tuscan seven-hour-roasted ham, rotisserie-roasted ducklings and hens, Buffalo wings, and Campagna's signature meatballs will do their collective, scrumptious part to ameliorate the painful memory of what might have been. (29 East 21st Street; 420-1600. Order by Saturday.)

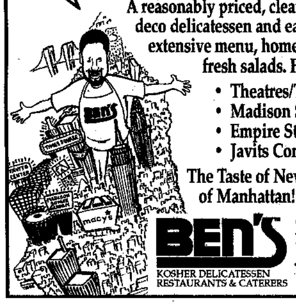
Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Commonwealth Grill & Brewery—This Boston brewery import in Rockefeller Center attracts a riotous after-work crowd for its craft beers. The lunch and dinner menus feature American fare like grilled swordfish over lemon pasta, braised lamb shank, duck breast, and tuna, not to mention the obligatory burger. *35 W. 48th St. (977-2269). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Da Rosina—A convenient pretheater location, specializing in homemade pasta and other casual Italian fare, like baked polenta marinara and veal scallopine. Try the $19.98 prix fixe dinner or the $12.95 lunch. *342 W. 46th St. (977-7373). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Photograph by Liz Steger.



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"44"—Still the first stop for the officers of the Condé Nast empire. Deeply plush, windowless décor feels like the center of the Earth. Given the theatricality, surprisingly terrific food. *44 W. 44th St., in the Royalton (944-8844). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Johnnie's—This small, old-world Italian restaurant has been a midtown fixture for over three and a half decades. The menu runs the gamut from basic pastas to chicken, veal, and seafood dishes; the $14.95 dinner special is a particularly good deal. *135 W. 45th St. (869-5565). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Pyrenées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (246-0044). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Mars 2112—Theme restaurants go intergalactic at this big-budget newcomer, which transports diners to the red planet via space shuttle. The food—applewood-smoked pork chops, lobster-mango sushi, smoked-duck quesadillas—will be, for the most part, familiar to earthlings. *1633 Broadway, at 51st St. (582-2112). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Molyvos—This interpretive Greek restaurant a stone's throw from Carnegie Hall is a large, stylishly rustic showcase for chef Jim Botsacos's serious Mediterranean menu. Sit at one of the tables up front for drinks and meze, or indulge larger appetites with dishes like grilled octopus, rabbit stifado, and vegetable dolmades. *871 Seventh Ave., nr. 55th St. (582-7500). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Osteria al Doge—Cheerful restaurant in the theater district serving fine Northern Italian cuisine, with a menu that includes fritto misto, risotto, and a variety of pizzas and pastas. *142 W. 44th St. (944-3643). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

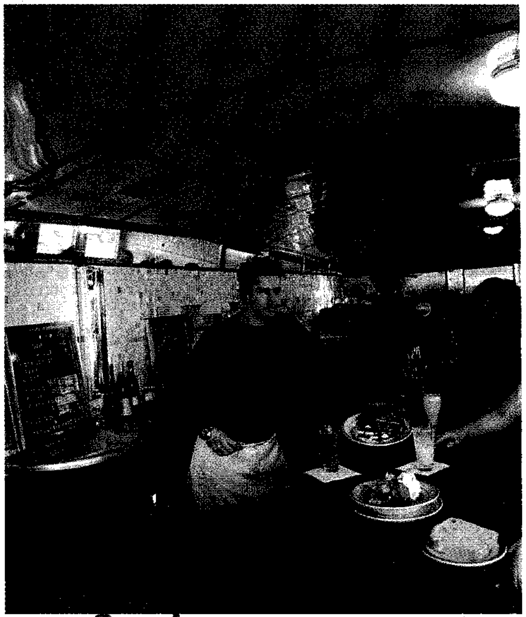
Palio—Stylish midtown duplex restaurant, with a famous muraled bar and elegant preparations of Italian dishes like spinach-and-ricotta gnocchi with a vegetable ragout, and artichoke-and-marjoram ravioli in fresh tomato sauce. *151 W. 51st St. (245-4850). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Pig and Whistle—This is midtown's notion of an Irish bar. A business clientele and a coming-and-going-to-the-theater crowd can find Irish specialties—both solid and liquid—here. *165 W. 47th St. (302-0112). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Rio de Janeiro—Meat is back in a big way at this churrascaria rodizio, where eighteen different cuts of beef are barbecued over a charcoal pit and served nonstop, until you say uncle. Live Brazilian music Wednesday through Sunday; prix fixe menus available. *127 W. 43rd St. (575-0808). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Tapika—Chef David Walzog's spicy cooking has transformed a formerly subdued space into a lively canteen with his version of haute Southwestern. Try the black-bean purée with chorizo and garlic flatbread or the grilled rabbit loin with cilantro oil and habanero sauce. The bar has its own snack menu and a super selection of micro-brews and tequilas. *950 Eighth Ave., at 56th St. (397-3737). (M–E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tino's.com—This duplex Italian restaurant, done up in an unusual blend of Victorian and modern styles, provides a welcome respite from Fifth Avenue's crazed shopping scene. The Northern Italian menu offers an array of risotti, and the wine list is extensive. *40 W. 56th St. (262-9300). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*



Photograph by Magdalena Caris.

Opening Williamsburgers

A 1927 dining car stranded beneath the Williamsburg Bridge amid factories and chop shops might be the last place you'd expect to find mussels, martinis, and masterly espressos—until you discover that its two young owners met and were deeply, stylistically influenced by their formative table-waiting and bartending years at Odeon and Balthazar. Andrew Tarlow and Mark Firth, residents of this bistro-deprived Brooklyn neighborhood, researched Diner's original look (the space previously housed Stacy's and, most recently, Sabrina's) and recruited friends to help strip and retile the mosaics, weld lighting fixtures, and raise the granite lunchman's counter to bar height. The management takes cocktails very seriously, and the drink list is given equal billing with chef Caroline Fidanza's limited menu of homey French-American staples like steak-frites, roast chicken, burgers, and cassoulet. (85 Broadway, at Berry Street, Brooklyn; 718-486-3077.)

57th–60th Streets

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Les Célébrités—Plush and elegant, this Art Deco dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen, turning out dishes like pyramid of tuna tartar and grilled tuna, and roasted lobster with vanilla bean and lemon pasta. And the artwork on the walls is by some very high-profile, and surprising, non-professionals. Dinner only; jacket required. *155 W. 58th St. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

540 Park @ The Regency Hotel—Named for its address, this American grill at the Regency Hotel has a clubby, comfortable atmosphere. The regional, eclectic menu ranges from seared-tuna spring roll and chicken-fried lobster to barbecued duck and black-bean quesadilla. If the term "power breakfast" didn't originate here, it should have. *540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (339-4050). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

JoJo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. Lunch upstairs, overlooking the street, is especially lovely. *160 E. 64th St. (223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

La Soirée d'Asie—The family behind this graciously elegant Vietnamese restaurant on one of the Upper East Side's most charming blocks has already established a stronghold in Connecticut. The Manhattan branch is more upscale, but serves a similar mix of classic and contemporary dishes like spring rolls, curries, and special soups. *156 E. 64th St. (421-7899). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Orienta—This pretty room on the Upper East Side has become a popular meeting spot for the young and the stylish. Asian accents in the décor reflect the (mostly Vietnamese) Pan-Asian fare. Chicken satay, spring rolls, tuna sashimi, and dumplings are indicative of the menu's range. *205 E. 75th St. (517-7509). Also, 470 Sixth Ave., nr. 11th St. (243-2222). (M) AE, DS, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *1596 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (585-3838). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. *1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Regional Thai Sa-Woy—The well-spiced, artfully presented food at this two-story Thai restaurant costs a bit more than it would at your run-of-the-mill pad thai parlor, but the peaceful ambience and elegant, antique-strewn décor may very well put you in the mood to splurge. *1479 First Ave., at 77th St. (744-6374). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sesumi—The neighborhood relies on this comfortable, brick-walled sushi parlor to satisfy all raw-fish cravings. Try one of the combo boxes. *1649 Second Ave., nr. 85th St. (879-1024). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Artepasta—Extremely affordable pasta palace with bright murals on the walls and unexpected extras like cioppino, veal capriciossa and salmon carpaccio. An unlimited champagne brunch reels 'em in. *106 W. 73rd St. (501-7014). Also, 81 Greenwich Ave. (229-0234). (I–M) AE.*

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gabriela's—Real Mexican food. Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados*, fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas*, fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. *685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (961-0574). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

La Caridad—Chino-Latino soul food in a neighborhood notoriously devoid of restaurant personality. Mammoth portions, enormous lines. *2199 Broadway, at 78th St. (874-2780). (I) ($).*

Londel's—Food cooked soulfully on a blooming strip off Strivers Row. Live music most nights and velvet rope at the front door create an ambience not often associated with home cooking. Try the smothered pork chops, but be forewarned: Everything's cooked to order—*slow*-cooked to order. *2620 Frederick Douglass Blvd., at 140th St. (234-6114). (I–M) CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (864-7326). (I) ($).*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai,

ASK GAEL

Must I pay an arm and a toe for tuna?

The wits behind Trata—a pizza king and two former chefs from Estiatorio Milos—want us to believe they can serve a whole Arctic char for two, exquisitely rare, for $22.68. That's what it says on the bill. So, okay, Second Avenue and 70th Street is not midtown. The tiny tables wear paper. The help is improvisational. Glistening sea denizens pose on a hill of ice center-stage, waiting to be chosen. Imagine, just $4 for garlicky tsatsiki (cucumbers in yogurt), tarama (fish-roe purée), or overbaked oven-baked limas and $4.25 for a beet salad two can divide. A restaurateur friend marvels, "I can't believe it. Yellowfin for $16. Just $15 for salmon." No wonder the place is totally jammed with canny Upper East Siders. Not everything is Milos quality, though the octapodi is world-class. If the bargain's not just a come-on or rehearsal for bankruptcy, Trata could be an omega-3 dream. (1331 Second Avenue, near 70th Street; 535-3800.)

Photograph by Liz Steger.

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NEW YORK

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beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The menu is full of high-ticket items like Beluga caviar, Kobe steak, truffles, and foie gras, which makes the $29.95 pretheater dinner, available from 5 to 6:30, a great deal. And now, lunch is served Tuesday through Friday. *222 W. 79th St. (799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouthwatering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sylvia's—A staple of the neighborhood, with a tradition and ambience strong enough to draw loyal customers from uptown and downtown. Live entertainment that truly aids digestion. *328 Lenox Ave., bet. 126th and 127th Sts. (996-0660). (I) ($).*

Wells—A talked-about chicken-and-waffle combination. One way or another, this restaurant has been a neighborhood mainstay for nearly 60 years. *2247 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., at 132nd St. (234-0700). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Lundy Bros.—This restored landmark restaurant serves a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken; and steak but specializes in lobster and other varieties of seafood. Don't miss the oyster bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. Sunday brunch buffet available. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Peter Luger's—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Two Tom's—Firehouse-kitchen ambience and a waiter who tells you what you want to eat. The double-rib pork chops are peerless, and the escarole is great, too, but refuse the mercilessly overcooked pasta when it's offered. Eat early during the week and call ahead on weekends. Regular private parties make getting a table frustrating, but it's always worth the trouble. *255 Third Ave., nr. Union St. (718-875-8689). (I) ($).*

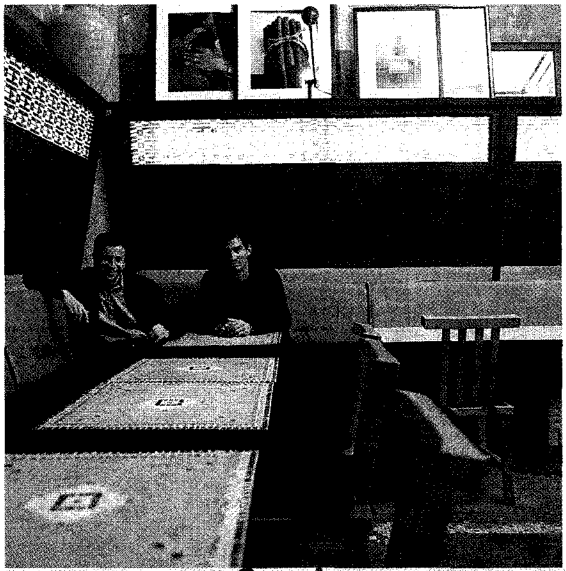
Queens

Elias Corner—Mix with the locals in Astoria as they queue up for a table at this Greek fish tavern. Don't wait for a menu; it won't come. Instead, eyeball the counter as you enter. If the offerings look like today's catch, they are. The owner fetches the fish each morning. Opt for the deep-fried, pinky-size bait fish over the squid. *24–01 31st St., at Astoria Blvd. (718-932-1510). (M) ($).*

Pearson's Texas Barbecue—Deservedly heralded as New York's best barbecue, this cozy Queens joint draws fans from much farther than across the East River. The barbecued Texas beef is sublime. *5-16 51st Ave., Long Island City (718-937-3030). (I) ($).*

Staten Island

Aesop's Tables—Arrive by ferry or bridge to this charming bistro and garden that serves inventive, bold Mediterranean fare with an emphasis on handpicked fresh seafood. *1233 Bay St., Rosebank (718-720-2005). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*



Opening

The Secret Word Is Gaucho

The infamous SoHo corner that was first J.S. VanDam, then the Falls, and then the nightclub Buddha Bar returns to its restaurant roots as Vandam, a collaboration between restaurateur and Buddha partner Frederick Lesort (pictured, above left), photographer's rep–ex-model Ray Brown (at right), and Alison Sarofim, who consulted with Argentine chef Fernando Trocca on the French–South American menu. Scallop seviche, yuca-dusted foie gras, and the now ubiquitous Argentine rib eye with chimichurri sauce set the Latin American theme, which extends to a late-night tapas menu of duck-confit empanadas and ratatouille tamales. Soon, the sunlit, wood-and-leather-outfitted room—inspired in part by a Paul Taylor tango, according to designer Jeffrey Cayle—will open for lunch. (150 Varick Street, at Vandam Street; 352-9090.)

Photograph by Robert Wright.

nightlife

Reich...Rage Against the Machine...Beasties

Concerts

"The Best of Gilbert and Sullivan"—The very model of a modern major retrospective concert: Skitch Henderson leads the New York Pops and the city's oldest G&S society, the 75-year-old Blue Hill Troupe, through faves from *Pirates of Penzance, H.M.S. Pinafore*, and others. 1/29 at 8. *Carnegie Hall, 154 W. 57th St. (247-7800). $17–$65.*

George Mgrdichian & Dennis Koster—Self-taught Armenian *oud* phenom Mgrdichian and fire-breathing flamenco guitarist Koster jam on Armenian classics, plus some Spanish-inflected ditties. Mgrdichian is a veteran of sessions with Ravi Shankar, Bob Dylan, and Dave Brubeck, while Koster has played his share of respectable, uptown-type houses in his day. A pairing of virtually limitless promise. 1/30 at 8. *Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400). $21.*

Phil Minton Quartet; "Blue" Gene Tyranny—In the right mouth, vocal improv (not just scat, but full-on free-associative verbalizing) can be a pretty remarkable feat to witness; of course, it can also represent your worst beat-poetry nightmare come true. For its new suite, *mouthfull of ecstasy*, Minton's outfit draws on an already tripped-out source, *Finnegan's Wake*, as a jumping-off point for its free-jazz-inflected wandering. Tyranny augments his trio with the Hazardous Material String Quartet, for his own premiere—*Tone of Voice at 36.* 1/28 at 8. *Merkin Concert Hall at Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330).*

Rage Against the Machine—You can't go into an East Village bathroom without seeing the words FREE MUMIA scrawled on the wall. A left-wing journalist, Mumia Abu-Jamal was convicted 17 years ago of murdering a Philadelphia police officer. And while we're in no position to weigh in on the ongoing debate over the writer's guilt or innocence, the furious metal-punkers of Rage Against the Machine are using this show—which also features hometown rock-rap superstars the Beastie Boys and L.A. punks Bad Religion—to raise money for Abu-Jamal's legal-defense fund. All three acts on the bill are sufficient draws to guarantee a sellout; whether the fans will actually be supporters of the cause they're underwriting is an open question. 1/29 at 7. *Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, N.J. (212-307-7171). $25.*

Roulette 20th Anniversary Benefit Concert—After twenty years and 2,000 concerts in its TriBeCa loft, the Roulette performance space is pulling up stakes and relocating. That means a rare chance for marginal worthies like William Parker and John Zorn to play uptown, alongside institutional revolutionaries like Steve Reich—who's about to release a CD of his pulse-driven music, remixed by latter-day downtown luminaries. 1/30 at 8. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500). $50–$1,000.*

"The Sacred Side of Jazz"—Jazz's spiritual roots are as deep as they are wide. The gospel-shout-along qualities of soul jazz and hard bop, for instance, served as a refreshingly visceral antidote to the cerebralism of bebop—and of free jazz, whose very "freedom" could resemble an academic conceit. At this gig, Bobby Watson, Ray Bryan, Eric Reed, and John Patitucci explore the ways church music has affected the genre. 1/25 at 8. *Merkin Concert Hall at Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330). $20.*

"Sepia Panorama: Duke Ellington and the Silver Screen"—Hosted by Loren Schoenberg. 1/28 at 7 and 9. *Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, 154 W. 57th St. (307-7171). $10.*

"Tribute to Dizzy Gillespie"—Once a year during the two decades before his 1992 death, John Birks Gillespie traveled to the Lower East Side's Abrons Arts Center to play a concert. And every year of the past five, the Center has repaid its debt to the bop giant's memory with a tribute concert. This year, Gillespie devotee Jon Faddis fills the trumpeter's daunting shoes, and Slide Hampton, Jimmy Heath, Mike Longo, John Lee, Winard Harper, and the Henry Street Settlement Symphony Orchestra provide backing. However familiar they are, Gillespie standards like "Salt Peanuts" and "Tin Tin Deo" never grow stale in the hands of masters like these. 1/28 at 7. *Harry De Jur Playhouse, Abrons Arts Center at Henry Street Settlement, Grand St. at Pitt St. (598-0400). $10–$20.*

Clubland

Arlene Grocery—The Lower East Side's newish, hippish, and appealingly inexpensive (okay, free) rock and folk venue. 1/28: Sean Altman. 1/29: Smitty's. 1/30: Joe Bendix; Heathens. *95 Stanton St. (358-1633). $.*

Bottom Line—1/29: "Required Listening," indeed: New Orleans Afro-Cajun-bluesman Olu Dara is a force of nature in his own right. But this bill—which also includes young guitar phenom Mary Cutrufello (who's been likened to Hendrix more than can possibly be good for her) and Throwing Muses alum Kristin Hersh—promises to provide a breathtakingly broad panorama of American songwriting as it now stands. 1/27–1/28: Dave Davies's Kinks Kronikles; Paul Ruderman Band. 1/30: Blue Rodeo; Tom Wilson. *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

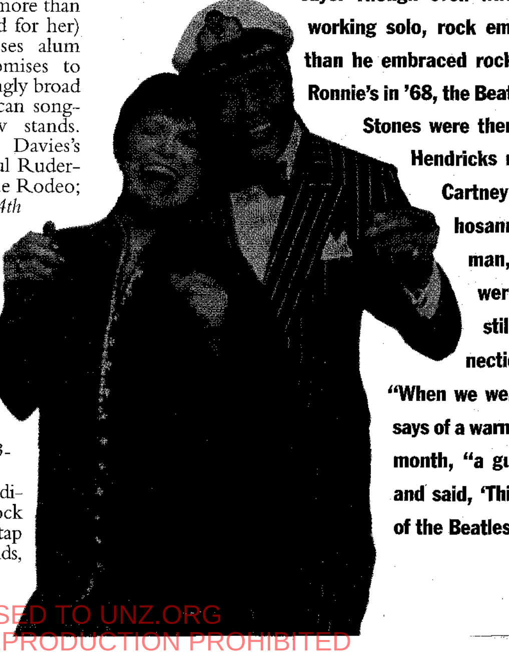
Bowery Ballroom—The Mercury Lounge's roomy new Lower East Side outpost, where up-and-comers can hone their big-room chops. 1/26: Sinead Lohan. *6 Delancey St. (533-2111).*

Brownies—Avenue A's divey post-college rock spot, with good tap beers, on-the-rise bands, and the occasional big name trying to keep a low profile. Cozy and congenial, even if you're not pierced. 1/27: Julia Greenberg. 1/28: Sprinkle Genies. 1/29: Fifteen years on, guitarist Tara Key's trio Antietam is as convincing and electrifying a guitar-rock outfit as you'll find—with killer riffs,

Talent

Words, Words, Words

All art may, as Walter Pater maintained, aspire to the condition of music. But that doesn't mean music can't aspire to the condition of literature. And as the most notorious practitioners of "vocalese"—the cunning application of peripatetic, screwy lyrics to instrumental-jazz tunes, solos and all—Lambert, Hendricks & Ross helped it along. In 1956, Jon Hendricks got the idea to form a group after hearing King Pleasure's vocalese of "Moody's Mood for Love." Those were lean times, Hendricks recalls: "Dave Lambert suggested that we sing some Basie tunes before we died—we were literally starving to death!" The two recruited Scottish chanteuse Annie Ross, who also had an uncanny knack for verbalizing the most tortuous of bop licks. Before the group broke up in '62, their loquacious renditions of "Moanin'," "Centerpiece," and "Twisted" inspired *Time* magazine to dub the trio "the James Joyces of jive." This week at the Blue Note, January 26 through 31, Hendricks & Ross stage their first full-scale collaboration since those halcyon days (Lambert died in 1966). Hendricks feels the current swing revival has provided the duo with the perfect excuse to reunite after 37 years apart: "People haven't felt this good since those days," he says. Though even when Hendricks was working solo, rock embraced him more than he embraced rock. "When I played Ronnie's in '68, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones were there opening night," Hendricks recalls. "Paul McCartney offered me many hosannas: 'Wonderful, man, wonderful.' They were all fans." Ross still finds an odd connection to the Fab Four. "When we were in Boston," she says of a warm-up gig earlier this month, "a guy came up to me and said, 'This is like a reunion of the Beatles!'" DAVID YAFFE



Photograph by Jacques Lowe.

blistering solos, and biting vocal performances that'll make you forget the whole electronica craze ever happened. 1/30: Blues-punk also-rans Railroad Jerk; with the *eccentric and charmingly* off-kilter Babe the Blue Ox. *161 Avenue A, at 11th St. (420-8392). $.*

CBGB & OMFUG—Ground zero of punk's Stateside explosion and, twenty years later, still a smoking, flyer-strewn pit—in a good way. Dig the new, unscuzzy basement lounge. 1/26: Clearview 177; Missing Joe; Lazy Susan; Pull. 1/27: Deprivation; Antipathy; Chaos Theory; Pimp Daddy Longstocking. 1/29: American Standard; X Number 5; Dry Water. 1/30: Mirth; IZ; Faft. *315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052). $.*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—A downtown blueserie, comfortably down-home, with living-room couches behind the stage. Dedicated to bringing us the best and brightest from the midwestern blues capital. 1/25: Danny Doll. 1/26: Michael Packer. 1/27: Dana Fuchs. 1/28: Black Widow Band. 1/29: Ernie Williams. 1/30: Quintessential bar-blues guitarist Ronnie Earl. 2/1: Night Owl Bird. *73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). $.*

Coney Island High—Originally a glam-trash revival hall, this two-level East Village funhouse now reflects the neighborhood's cultural diversity, with indie-rock and punk bands sharing the venue with some of the city's wackiest parties. 1/26: Weston; Kowalskis. *15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959).*

Connolly's—Saturdays, Black 47 packs 'em in. *14 E. 47th St. (867-3767).*

The Cooler—A former meat locker, this subterranean haunt offers spooky-cool atmosphere and cutting-edge sounds in equal measures. The free Monday-night series is one of the best musical bargains in the city: Past performers have included free-jazz great Rashied Ali, free-jazz wannabe Thurston Moore, and out-and-out freak Beck. 1/29: Scottish Roddy; Poka Poka; Penniless Wilds; 527s; Drumhead. 1/30: Kingsize; Scotty Marz; Frankie Bones. *416 W. 14th St. (229-0785). $.*

Fez—Mingus fever and lush *faux*-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today. 1/30: Like your retro-hipsterism spiked with a dose of biting irony? Lars Vegas are your guys. Blending goofy, Esquivel-inspired exotica, a swinging big-band sensibility, and a distinctly sketch-comic approach to songwriting (their set includes "Ficus," an ode to houseplants), the Boston lounge nonet will cook the kitsch right out of you. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—A midsize bi-level rock venue with moody chandeliers and a sort of haunted-bordello look. It's a bit of a crush near the stage, but there's an amiable bar, 119, right around the corner for a preshow aperitif. "Savoy Sundays" are weekly swingfests of ballroom dancing. 1/28–1/29: On last year's *Car Wheels on a Gravel Road*, singer-guitarist Lucinda Williams updated the whole concept of country rock to new heights of polish and emotional subtlety. That's no mean feat, considering those two qualities are generally present in inverse proportion to one another. Live, Williams continues to be a riveting, charismatic performer, flawlessly mixing tunes from her old Folkways days with the newer, slicker songs. 1/30: Brooklyn native Toshi Reagon—daughter of Sweet Honey in the Rock's Bernice Johnson Reagon—throws down a mean blues-rock riff and wails in a voice that undoubtedly makes her mother proud. *17 Irving Pl. (777-6800).*

Knitting Factory—The ever-expanding Disneyland of downtown music, with three floors, four stages, *four microbrew-bearing bars, and some of the* biggest names in now music. Chill out in the sub-basement Old Office lounge. 1/26: Candy Butchers; Danielle Howle; Lemon Juice Quartet;. 1/27: Saxophonist John Zorn, keyboardist John Medeski, and guitarist Marc Ribot join forces to form a downtown supergroup with unlimited potential for brainy abstraction—or hard-bitten grooves, depending on their collective mood. 1/28: Tenor colossus David S. Ware may well be the loudest man in jazz today. His Coltrane-influenced, mind-bending squalls are alternately frustrating and thrilling. 1/29: Cyro Baptista; Vira Loucos; Harriet Tubman; Hasidic New Wave. *74 Leonard St. (219-3055). $*

Manny's Car Wash—A little Chicago on the Upper East Side. Mondays, beware salivating yuppie swells here for ladies' night. Every Sunday, it's Manny's World Famous Blues. Mondays: Craig Dreter & Friends. 1/27: Dave Keyes Band; David Johansen. 1/29–1/30: Larry McCray. *1558 Third Ave., bet. 87th and 88th Sts. (369-BLUES).*

Maxwell's—After a couple years' dormancy, New Jersey's (and perhaps the tri-state area's) finest rock club is back with a vengeance. 1/25: Superchunk. 1/28: Toasters. 1/29: Old 97's; Los Dudes. 1/30: Dave Davies's Kinks Kronikles. *1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).*

Mercury Lounge—Once a headstone parlor, now one of the city's hippest and most congenial music spots, hosting rock and country artists groomed for the more au courant time slots of MTV. 1/26: Dreamkillers; 1/27: Marvelous. 1/29: Halcion; Gogol Bordello. 1/30: Old 97s; Hangdogs. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

S.O.B.'s—The city's premier world-music, reggae, and soul-jazz venue, presenting acts that could fill stadia back home and local talent that might one day do the same here. Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 1/25: Tito Puente. 1/27–1/28: Following last year's mini-invasion, another wave of genuine Cubans (musicians, that is), hits town, this time in the form of Havana favorites La Charanga and Habanera. 2/1: Imagen. *204 Varick St. (243-4940).*

The Supper Club—A large, grand ballroom with a starry ceiling and challenging acoustics. Fridays and Saturdays at 8, the Supper Club's house big band swings with abandon. 1/29: Swingerhead. *240 W. 47th St. (921-1940).*

Tonic—Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, this alcohol-free sub-Delancey hole-in-the-wall's got its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. 1/27: Pitchbrite; Noto; Craig I-Sound. 1/28–1/30: Former Lounge Lizard axman Arto Lindsay can seduce audiences with his quiet Brazilian crooning one second, then knock them on their behinds the next with a flurry of freaked-out free-jazz crunching. Both effects are thrilling and bizarre. 1/31 (afternoon show): David Krakauer's Klezmer Madness Ensemble. 1/31 (evening): Damon and Naomi. *107 Norfolk St. (358-7503). $.*

Tramps—One of the city's better venues for great roots music and happening indie rock, Tramps eschews high concept for straightforward presentation. Avoid the neck-craning mid-stage column by arriving early. 1/29: Hoboken sonic-texture fetishists Yo La Tengo; Other Dimensions in Music. 1/30: Blonde Redhead. *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Wetlands—A groovy club-kid activist hang with neo-hippie atmosphere and far-flung musical guests. N.B.: Tuesday night is (Grateful) Dead Night. 1/26: ViperHouse. 1/27: Roots. 1/28: Walkinbird.. 1/29: Groove Collective. 1/30: Blind Man's Sun. *161 Hudson St. (966-5244) $.*

Jazz

Birdland—Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Every Thursday night, Chico O'Farrill's smoking Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra. Every Friday night, the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Every Friday, the Lew Anderson Big Band swings from 5:30 to 7:30. 1/26: Maria Schneider Jazz Orchestra. 1/27–1/30: George Young Sextet. 2/1: James Carter. $15–$20 cover; $10 minimum. Sets at 9 and 11:30. *315 W. 44th St. (581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a first-rate sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. 1/25: The New Directions Band, featuring adventurous young swingers Greg Osby, Stefon Harris, Mark Shim, and Jason Moran. 1/26–1/31: Hendricks & Ross (see box, page 79). Sets at 9 and 11:30. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Cajun—A brassy and brightly lit bit of New Orleans in Chelsea, dedicated to Preservation Hall–style Dixieland. Regulars include Eddy Davis, the banjoist who accompanies Woody Allen and Chuck Folds, a stride pianist and sometime accompanist to trumpet legend Doc Cheatham. 129 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. (691-6174).

Detour—With no cover and top-notch young players, this cozy, tiled East Village joint packs 'em in every night of the week. 1/25: Matt Wilson Quartet. 1/28: Miri Ben-Ari Quartet. 1/29: Matt Hong Quartet. 1/30: Tom Beckham. *349 E. 13th St. (533-6212).*

Flea Theatre—Throughout November, the TriBeCa space presents the "Premiere Percussion" series, featuring some of the city's most adventurous rhythm-makers. 2/1: Danny Tunick. 2/2: Ikue Mori. Sets at 8; $10 cover. *41 White St. (226-0051).*

Iridium—In the cozy basement across from Lincoln center, you'll find some of the finest chow in jazzland, plus formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours. 1/26–1/31: Jacky Terrasson Trio. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30 Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

The Jazz Standard—A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, living legends, and hungry young comers. Mon., Tues., and Fri. at 5:30 and Sat. at 7, guitarist David O'Rourke swings in the upstairs 27 Standard bar. Sets Tues.–Thurs. at 9 and 11, Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10:30, and midnight, Sun. at 7. $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. 1/28–1/31: Larry Willis Trio Reunion, with George Mraz and Al Foster. *116 E. 27th St. (576-2232).*

Knickerbocker Bar & Grill—A wood-paneled and brass-railed restaurant with Old New York ambience and excellent—occasionally legendary—pianists. *33 University Pl. (228-8490).*

Museum of Modern Art—Fridays, in addition to throwing its doors open for pay-what-you-wish night, MOMA also transforms its cafeteria into a (sort of) swinging jazz club. 1/29: "Central Plaza Revisited: An Authentic Jam Session." Shows at

Performance

Mumia in the Meadowlands

The East Village's favorite political cause—the ongoing dispute over the cop-killing conviction of Mumia Abu-Jamal—gets a high-profile shot in the arm this week from Rage Against the Machine (right) and the Beastie Boys (left). The Ivy League agit-punks join forces with the p.c. pinups in a fund-raiser for the journalist at Continental Airlines Arena, January 28; see "Concerts."

5:30. *11 W. 53rd St. (708-0480).*

Showman's Café—Reopened right on 125th Street (though not, unfortunately, in its original location adjacent to the Apollo), the legendary jazz watering hole offers slow-cooked soul jazz and funkified hard bop every night. 1/29–1/30: Parris Farrad Quartet. No cover; two-drink minimum. *375 E. 125th St. (864-8941). $.*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post-Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Shows start at 10. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. 1/26–1/31: Greg Osby Five. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. *88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. 1/25–1/31: Celebrating its thirty-fourth year in residence, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra expands its usual weekly gig to a full seven-night run. A veritable institution, the orchestra provides a big-band outlet for some of the city's best players. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Wilson's Bar & Grill—The Upper West Side's finest jazz- and torch-singer bar. 1/30: Judy Barnett. *201 W. 79th St. (769-0100).*

Zinno—This pretty Italian restaurant has good sight lines and decent sound from most of the tables, though views from the bar are largely obscured. Mondays: Sol Yaged Combo. Tuesdays: Kendra Shawk; Frank Kimbrough; Dean Johnson. 1/27–1/30: James Williams Trio, with Peter Washington, Tony Reedus, and guest singers Miles Griffith and Roger Holland. 2/3–2/6: Russell Malone Trio. *126 W. 13th St. (924-5182).*

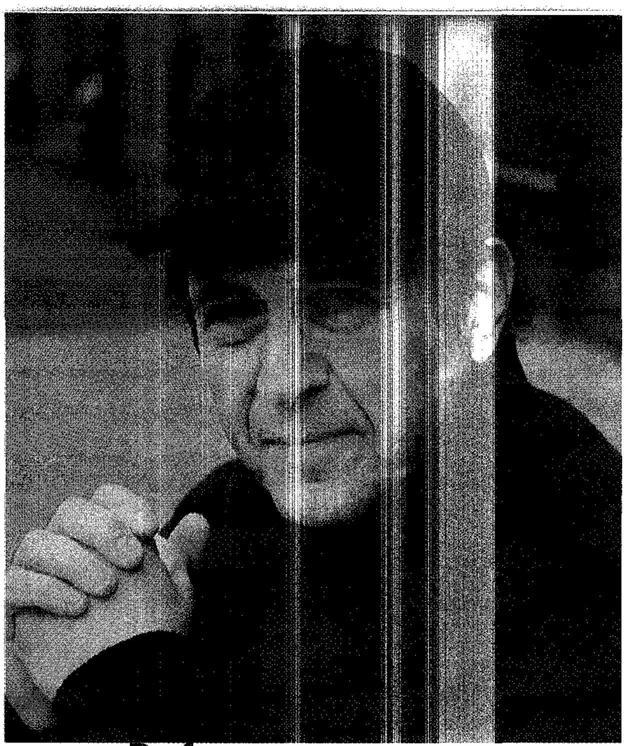
Comedy

Boston Comedy Club—*Animal House* ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Tues.–Thurs., shows at 9:30; Fri.–Sat., shows at 8, 10, and midnight. Jim Norton, DC Benny, Jim Gaffigan, Robert Kelly, Jordan Rubin, Nick Swardson & Macio. *82 W. 3rd St. (477-1000).*

Carolines Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. Wednesdays, "Gemini Lounge," with the Sklar Brothers. 1/26: Doctor Dre; Bob Smith. 1/27: Hedda Lettuce. 1/28: Paul Mooney. 1/29–1/30: Bobcat Goldthwait; Paul Mooney. 1/31: Judy Gold; Paul Mooney. $12.50–$24.50, two-drink minimum. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 8:30, 10:15, and midnight; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. Through 1/31: Tom Papa; Jim David; Todd Barry; Jim Norton; Robert Kelly. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat.; $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. Through 1/31: Joe Mulligan; Quentin Heggs; Jim Norton. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).*



Photograph by Alice Arnold.

Performance

The Reich Stuff

In honor of its twentieth anniversary—and to raise funds for a move to new digs—TriBeCa performing-arts space Roulette stages an uptown benefit at Alice Tully Hall, January 30. Steve Reich headlines a bill that includes sax maverick John Zorn and downtown MVP William Parker's Little Huey Creative Music Orchestra.

Gotham—An elegant, trendy, and palatial comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30. Cover is $12 Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights; two-drink minimum. 1/27: Comedy Salsa. 1/29–1/30: Wali Collins; Todd Barry; Rich Vos. *34 W. 22nd St. (367-9000).*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. 1/29–1/30: J. R. Havlan; Gregg Fitzsimmons; Rich Vos; Kevin Brennan. Shows Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri. at 7, 9, and 11:30; Sat. at 8, 10, and 12:15. Cover is $7–$12. *236 W. 78th St. (595-0850).*

Cabaret

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta, are the keynote of this Village landmark. Late dining. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).*

Cafe Carlyle—Tues.–Sat. at 9:30, Eartha Kitt. Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band. Sets at 8:45 and 10:45. $50 ($25 for Davis's late, Woody-free set); no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Cafe Pierre—Tues.–Sat., singer-pianist Kathleen Landis performs the work of George Gershwin in "Things Are Looking Up." $12 minimum; jacket and tie required. *Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (940-8195).*

Danny's Skylight Room—Through January: Blossom Dearie. $20 cover; $15 minimum. *346 W. 46th St. (265-8130).*

Don't Tell Mama—What better way to wind down after an evening of overwrought Broadway fare than with some understated cabaret? 1/28–1/30: "Merci Maurice." $12 cover; two-drink minimum. *343 W. 46th St. (757-0788).*

Duplex Cabaret—Thurs. and Sat. through 2/27, Lorinda Lisitza in "Daddy's Girl." Set at 10; $15 cover. *61 Christopher St. (255-5438).*

Eighty-Eight's—A West Village venue whose unassuming façade conceals a top-notch little theater within. $15 cover; two-drink minimum. Thursdays through 1/28 at 8: Teri Lynn Paul. Fridays through 1/29: Barbara Brussell. Saturdays through 1/30: Patrick DeGennaro. *228 W. 10th St. (924-0088).*

FireBird Café—The theater district's newest post-show snuggery, right next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant—steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen and you'll be fine. 1/26–2/6: Nancy Ford. Tues.–Thurs., sets at 9. Fri. and Sat., sets at 9 and 11. $30 cover; two-drink minimum. 1/26–2/6: Nancy Ford. *363 W. 46th St. (586-0244).*

Phoebe Legere—"Swoon." With Swingalicious. Sundays at 8 and 10:30. *Clementine, 1 Fifth Ave. (253-0003).*

Pyramid—Thursdays: "The Donkey Show." Doors open at 7:30. $12. *101 Ave. A (971-1016).*

Sardi's—Fridays, John Malino's combo plays jazz standards. No cover; $12 minimum. Thursdays: Mark Nadler. $15; $12 minimum. *234 W. 44th St. (221-8444).*

Westbeth Music Hall—Tues.–Sat. through 2/23, Kate Clinton in "Correct Me If I'm Right." $20–$35. *151 Bank St. (307-4100).*

Bars

Bar d'O—An elegant and secluded bar on a lost corner in Greenwich Village. Perfect for a rendezvous (whatever your preference). Be sure to catch Joey Arias's delinquent and daring drag show, every Tuesday night. *29 Bedford St., at Downing St. (627-1580).*

Blue & Gold Tavern—Sure, it's a hangout for underage drinkers and yuppies tired of waiting in the line outside McSorley's. But this Polish pub sells beers for *two bucks*—and its glitchy jukebox has been known to give as many as 50 selections per dollar. All well worth elbowing past the braces-and-fake-I.D.'s set for. *79 E. 7th St. (473-8918).*

Joe's Bar—Not to be confused with the trendy Joe's *Pub*, this East Village dive offers as its main attractions a truly lousy pool table and a crowd that makes you forget Avenue A has been gentrified. The jukebox that earned this place the moniker "Joe's Cowboy Bar." *520 E. 6th St. (473-9093).*

The Room—This candlelit SoHo joint suffers from a perpetual, if mild, identity crisis—it can't decide whether it's a lounge, an indie-rock hang, a reclaimed industrial space, or just a regular neighborhood bar. But the unintimidating crowd, generally good music, and truly eclectic beer selection make the Room an oasis of normalcy. *144 Sullivan St. (477-2102).*

The View Lounge—What can you say about a rotating bar hundreds of feet above Times Square? In spite of—or because of—its utterly impersonal ambience, it's a classic, and well worth the exorbitantly high prices. *Marriott Marquis, 1535 Broadway, at 45th St., forty-eighth floor (398-1900).*

Von—Recently expanded to twice its original size, this beer-and-wine bar remains as cozy and welcoming as the establishments on the other end of Bleecker Street are frattish and impersonal. Plus, it has the best beer selection in the neighborhood. *3 Bleecker St. (473-3039).*

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

in concert

All-Strauss at the Philharmonic

Classical Music

Tuesday, January 26

London Symphony Orchestra—Performs Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4, with pianist Emanuel Ax, and Elgar's Symphony No. 1. Sir Colin Davis, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $25–$47.*

Philadelphia Orchestra—Performs Sibelius's Symphony No. 5 in E-flat major and Janáček's Act Two of *Jenufa*, with sopranos Anja Silja and Roberta Alexander, and tenors Clifton Forbis and Gordon Gietz. Sir Simon Rattle, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $18–$70.*

Husnu Onaran, Piano—Performs works by Mozart, Chopin, and others. *Merkin Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $20.*

Wednesday, January 27

New York Philharmonic—Performs Strauss's "Moonlight Music" from *Capriccio;* Duet Concertino for Clarinet and Bassoon, with clarinetist Stanley Drucker and bassoonist Judith LeClair; and Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier.* André Previn, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 6:45; $14–$73.*

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Performs works by Michael and Joseph Haydn and Leopold Mozart. *Weill Recital Hall, 154 W. 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $20.*

Chamber Music Society—Mezzo Anne Sofie von Otter performs works by Grieg, Berwald, Nielsen, and others. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $25–$35.*

New York Virtuosi—Perform *Noche encantada,* a program of works by Spanish and Latin American composers, with soprano Brenda Feliciano and guitarist Ricardo Cobo. Kenneth Klein, conductor. *Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse, 695 Park Ave., at 68th St. (772-4448), at 8; $24.*

Chamber Players of the League/ISCM—Perform works by Carter, Jacobs, Rokeach, and others. *Merkin Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $12.*

Renée Fleming, Soprano—Performs "Goethe Heroines: Suleika, Gretchen, and Mignon," featuring works by Schubert, Glinka, Liszt, and others, with pianist James Levine. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 7:30; $18–$70.*

Thursday, January 28

New York Philharmonic—Performs an all-Strauss program, with clarinetist Stanley Drucker, bassoonist Judith LeClair, and soprano Dame Felicity Lott. André Previn, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $14–$73.*

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Performs Haydn's Symphonies No. 84 and 98, and operatic selections, with baritone Thomas Hampson. Sir Charles Mackerras, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $16–$60.*

Little Orchestra Society—Performs "Much Ado About Music," a program of work by Ellington, Prokofiev, Debussy, and others inspired by Shakespeare. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 7:30; $20–$30.*

Bargemusic—Performances of Fauré, Takemitsu, and Chausson. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn (718-624-4061), at 7:30; $23.*

Great Performers/New Visions—Benjamin Bagby performs *Beowulf,* spoken and sung in Old English and accompanied by medieval harp. *Clark Studio Theater, Lincoln Center (875-5937), at 8; $30.*

Ned Rorem, Piano, and Kurt Ollman, Baritone—Perform Rorem's *War Scenes,* and three songs from *Evidence of Things Not Seen. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (570-3949), at 7; $15.*

Friday, January 29

New York Philharmonic—See 1/28.

New York Pops—Performs Gilbert & Sullivan favorites, with the Blue Hill Troupe. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $17–$65.*

Great Performers/New Visions—See 1/28.

Saturday, January 30

New York Philharmonic—See 1/28.

Great Performers/New Visions—See 1/28.

Sunday, January 31

Radio Symphony Orchestra of Berlin—Performs Prokofiev's Symphony No. 1, Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring,* with violinist Vladimir Spivakov. Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5937), at 3; $25–$47.*

Bargemusic—See 1/28, at 4.

Thomas Quasthoff, Bass-Baritone—Performs Schubert's *Winterreise,* with pianist Charles Spencer. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 2; $32.*

Monday, February 1

A Touch of Weill at Weill—Soprano Angelina Réaux, mezzo Joanna Simon, tenor Michael DeVries, and baritone Kurt Ollmann perform songs from *Johnny Johnson, Knickerbocker Holiday, Lady in the Dark,* and other Weill works. *Weill Recital Hall, 154 W. 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $50.*

William Wolfram, Piano—Performs works by Scriabin, Prokofiev, and Rachmaninoff. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $15–$25.*

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Opera

Metropolitan Opera—Performs Puccini's *La Bohème,* 1/26 at 7:30 and 1/30 at 1:30; Massenet's *Werther,* 1/27 and 1/30 at 8; Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor,* 1/28 at 8; and Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra,* 1/29 at 8. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (362-6000); $25–$210.*

Operaworks—Performs a double bill of Menotti's *The Medium* and *The Telephone,* 1/26 at 8. *West Park Auditorium, 165 W. 86th St. (873-9531); $15.*

Dance

New York City Ballet—Performs *Irish Fantasy,* Sonatine in G major, *La Valse,* and other works, 1/26–1/29 at 8, 1/30 at 2 and 8, and 1/31 at 3. Call for individual programs. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (870-5570); $10–$80.*

Eifman Ballet of St. Petersburg—Performs *Requiem* and *My Jerusalem,* 1/27 and 1/28 at 8; and *Red Giselle,* 1/29 at 8 and 1/30 and 1/31 at 2 and 8. *City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212); $25–$50.*

Ballet British Columbia—Performs Alleyne's *Sex Is My Religion,* Kudelka's *There, Below,* Godden's *Conversation Piece,* and other works, 1/26–1/29 at 8, 1/30 at 2 and 8, and 1/31 at 2 and 7:30. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (242-0800); $30.*

Dance Theater Workshop Carnival Series—Andrea E. Woods performs three new works with performance poet Hattie Gossett and composer Madeleine Yayodele Nelson, 1/28 and 1/29 at 8. Through 2/7. Wally Cardona Quartet performs *Open House 01,* with soloists from Martha Graham Dance Company, New York City Ballet, and José Limón Dance Company, 1/26–1/30 at 8, and 1/31 at 3. Through 2/14. *Bessie Schönberg Theater, 219 W. 19th St. (924-0077); $15.*

Previews

The Soprano

Nearly twelve years after her first Carnegie Hall appearance, soprano Renée Fleming makes her solo recital debut at the hallowed hall on Wednesday, accompanied by James Levine at the piano.

Photograph by John Swannell/Decca.

the mix

Cynthia Ozick and Leon Wieseltier

John Leonard's TV Notes

ht Like a Girl (1/26; 9 to 10 P.M.; A&E) is a shattered-knuckle account of the background and warm-up to the knock-down-drag-out during and after a split decision in a pro-boxing championship bout between Kathy "the Wildcat" Collins and Leah "the Kitten" Mellinger. Because defend-ng champ Collins, from Long Island, is a tough-talking, dirty-blonde hard-body who wants to be a cop, and Mellinger, from the Amish farming country of Pennsylvania, is a willowy former beauty queen, their rematch is less Martina versus Chrissie n a feminized Cold War than Tonya versus Nancy n a feminized Class War. *Inside Story* correspondent Bill Kurtis tells us all about it as if there were nothing appalling as well as prurient about young women willing to be as stupidly reckless of their bodies and brains as young men have always been.

at of the Sun (1/28; 9 to 11 P.M.; 2/4, 2/11, 2/18, and 2/25, 9 to 10 P.M.; Channel 13) is a six-hour *Mystery!* mini-series introducing Trevor Eve as a Scotland Yard detective who leaves London under a political cloud in 1931 for durance vile in the colonial constabulary in Nairobi, where he'll discover among caste-conscious English under African skies everything from blackmail and cocaine smuggling o incest and murder to racism and anti-Semitism, not to mention Egyptian cobras, gay sex, dead lions, nd Joss Ackland as a Boerish South African newspaper magnate. Eve, who refuses on principle to wear short pants, is assisted on the ground by a Kenyan corporal, Freddie Annobil-Dodoo, and in the air by an exceedingly fetching bush-pilot love interest, Susannah Harker. What starts slowly picks up steaminess as well as gravity, and concludes as a savage portrait of expatriate imperialists for whom Africa was a Continental Bath.

Turks (Thursdays; 9 to 10 P.M.; CBS) proves, if nothing else, the prime-time staying power of William Devane, this time the patriarch of a Chicago-Irish family of cops who finds in the arms of the local barmaid, Ashley Crowe, the understanding that he misses in his wife, Helen Carey, while two of his sons, David Cubitt and Matthew John Armstrong, wrestle with evildoers on the mean streets, and a third, Michael Muhney, seems to major at college in gambling. Some grit here but also a lot of déjà-voodoo, as if nobody responsible for the series had ever heard a note of *Hill Street Blues.* Adding to the retro feel is the fact that Devane with a crewcut looks surprisingly like Glenn Ford.

In Bad Taste: The John Waters Story (1/29; 8 to 9:15 P.M.; Independent Film Channel) celebrates the director of *Pink Flamingos, Cry-Baby, Hairspray, Serial Mom,* and, most recently, *Pecker,* while also mourning his superstar, Divine, with some cheerful hyperventilating by his Baltimore buddies from the low-rent white-trash days: such semi-stars of his productions as Ricki Lake, Deborah Harry, Tracy Lords, Kathleen Turner, Mink Stole, Johnny Depp, and Patty Hearst, and such collegial auteurs as Jim Jarmusch and Hal Hartley. Waters himself talks a lot, about the influence of Disney, Elvis, and fifties motorcycle movies, as well as his obsession with "extreme white people." Also included is behind-the-scenes trampoline footage from the set of *Desperate Living.* And the whole insouciant mess will be followed by a screening of *Polyester,* than which there is no film more cult-rate.

Tom Clancy's Netforce (2/1 and 2/4; 9 to 11 P.M.; ABC), from a Lionel Chetwynd teleplay based on a Clancy novel to be published simultaneously with the broadcast of the mini-series, is altogether satisfying trash television. Not the least of its virtues, in the near future of A.D. 2005, is Judge Reinhold as a Bill Gates–sort of billionaire control-freak nerd, named (get it?) Will Stiles, who deploys a mercenary army to seize control not merely of the White House but also of the Internet. All that stands between us and a geek monopoly on Web browsers and every other information-delivery system from satellites to fiber optics is Scott Bakula, the commander of a select FBI division specializing in computer crime. Is Brian Dennehy really on his side? Is Kris Kristofferson really dead ? Does Joanna Going really love him? Why haven't I explained CCH Pounder or Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa? Besides "virtual brothels," an "Asian contingency," and the pixilated "avatars" we first met in Neal Stephenson's cyberpunk novel *Snow Crash,* there is the usual media panic and a twenty-first-century reunion of John Browns at Harper's Ferry. After too many psychopathic Vietnam vets, Latin American drug lords, and Arab terrorists, I can't tell you how much I like the idea of Microsofties as the archvillains of the New Pulp.

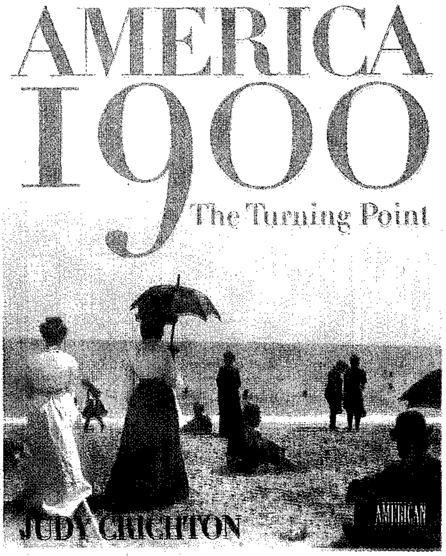
I'll Make Me a World: A Century of African-American Arts (2/1, 2/2, and 2/3; 9 to 11 P.M.; Channel 13), from the Blackside production company that gave us the estimable *Eyes on the Prize,* is a breathtaking historical account of black creativity in the American twentieth century. In music: from ragtime, jazz, and blues to rap; from Bessie Smith to Public Enemy. In literature: from Zora Neale Hurston to Ralph Ellison to Toni Morrison; from Langston Hughes to Gwendolyn Brooks. In theater: from Paul Robeson in *Othello* to Lorraine Hansberry, Ntozake Shange, August Wilson, and George C. Wolfe. In film: from Oscar Micheaux and Melvin Van Pebbles to Spike Lee and Julie Dash. In dance: from Delores Browne, Raven Wilkinson, and Arthur Mitchell to Alvin Ailey, Bill T. Jones, and Savion Glover. In art: from Jacob Lawrence and Augusta Savage to Faith Ringgold, Gwendolyn Knight, and Kara Walker. Never mind what Cornel West calls a "white normative gauge." These riches speak for themselves, and even if they didn't, even richer is what's said about them by remarkable talking heads like West, Brooks, Dash, Jones, and Amiri Baraka; Gerald Early, Sonia Sanchez, Billy Taylor, and John Edgar Wideman; Alice Walker, June Jordan, and Maxine Hong Kingston. Throughout, the most interesting argument is within the black community, about stereotypes, "primitivism," and "blaxploitation";

In Print

The Beginning of the End

We're only a month into 1999, and already the earnest pleas to reminisce and reflect like a nation of second-semester seniors are becoming a little too thick on the ground. "As you come to any historical marker, people take time off to study where they have been," says Judy Crichton, author of *America 1900, The Turning Point,* and a former executive producer for PBS's *The American Experience.* "For months before New Year's Day in 1900, every manner of writer spent an enormous amount of energy summing up the past and drumming up the future." So what was it like at the last turn of the century, anyway? "In 1900, we were just coming to terms with time and space being relative," says Crichton. "People who'd gone west in covered wagons could suddenly take high-speed trains and such. We were becoming a world power, and with power came problems; our technology was taking over the world and we were not necessarily making friends because of it. Slavery was dead but racism was growing." Hmmm, so the big issues were race, the Americanization of the world, and rapidly developing new technologies shrinking the planet. "We did have many of the same national concerns then," Crichton says. "I think a major difference was that people were far more optimistic; anxieties have intensified because our personal control has not evolved at the same rate as our material capabilities. The upside is that I can e-mail my grandchildren." Judy Crichton will be speaking January 26 at 8:15 P.M. See "Lectures and Panels" for details.

ARIEL LEVY



between W.E.B. Du Bois and the Harlem Renaissance modernists; between Richard Wright and James Baldwin on protest novels; between Alice Walker and the *Boyz N the Hood*. It's triumphant television.

Radio Highlights

Concerts at the Frick—Fridays at 9 P.M. 1/29: Tenor Ian Bostridge and pianist Julius Drake give a live performance of chamber music at the Frick Collection in Manhattan. Hosted by John Schaefer. WNYC, 93.9.

Casper Citron—Saturdays at 10 P.M. 1/30: Jessica Neuwith, president of Equality Now, and Kenneth Franzblau, liaison to the United Nations Human Rights Committee, discuss the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights; Charles L. Mee, author of *A Nearly Normal Life*. WOR, 710 AM.

The Lewis Burke Frumkes Show—Sundays at 8 P.M. 1/31: Elizabeth Strout, author of *Amy and Isabelle*. WPAT, 930 AM.

The Written Word

"Reminiscing Literary Lives"—1/26 at 6:30 P.M.: The third of six Tuesday-evening literary discussions curated by Jill Krementz in conjunction with her new book of photographs, *The Jewish Writer*, with Midge Decter, Norman Podhoretz, Ruth Wisse, and Adam Bellow. CUNY, 33 W. 42nd St., eighteenth floor (642-2634); free.

J. Hoberman—1/26 at 7 P.M.: The *Village Voice* film critic reading from *The Red Atlantis*. Posman Books, 1 University Pl. (533-2665); free.

Patrick McCabe—1/26 at 7 P.M.: The author of *The Butcher Boy* reading from his latest, *Breakfast on Pluto*. New York University's Glucksman Ireland House, 1 Washington Mews (998-3950); free.

Farai Chideya—1/26 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading from *The Color of America: Our Multicultural Future*. Barnes & Noble Union Square, 33 E. 17th St. (253-0810); free.

Claire Bloom—1/30 at 8 P.M.: The actress reads from Japanese poems, Shakespearean sonnets, and the verses of Wallace Stevens as flutist Eugenia Zukerman plays selections by Debussy, Rorem, and Mancini. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $25.

Toni Morrison—2/1 at 8 P.M.: Reading from *Paradise*. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $15.

Lectures and Panels

Judy Crichton—1/26 at 8:15 P.M.: The author of *America 1900*. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $18.

"Do Book Reviews Still Matter?"—1/26 at 6 P.M.: A panel discussion with Max Rodriguez of *QBR The Black Book Review*, Carol Fitzgerald of *The Book Report*, Sybil Steinberg of *Publisher's Weekly*, Brenda Marsh of Barnes&Noble.com, and Robert Wietrak of Barnes & Noble, Inc. The Time & Life Building, 1271 Sixth Ave., bet. 50th and 51st Sts., eighth floor (663-5824); $10.

"Wonder and the Jurassic: Mr. Wilson's Cabinet"—1/26 at 6:30 P.M.: A slide presentation about the Museum of Jurassic Technology in West Los Angeles with Lawrence Weschler. The Bronfman Center, 7 E. 10th St. (998-2100); free.

Cynthia Ozick and Leon Wieseltier—1/27 at 8 P.M.: Discussing death, mourning, and introspection in Jewish life, at the 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $15.

"East Meets West"—1/27 at 10 A.M.: Horticulturalists Dan Hinkley and Darrell Probst recount their adventures as plant hunters. The two nursery owners will discuss rare plants, new species, and prized antique varieties to add to your garden. The New York Botanical Garden, Rotunda, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd. (718-817-8747); $23–$25.

"Jackson Pollack: Various Views"—1/28 at 7 P.M.: Howard Buchwald, Andrew Forge, Wolf Kahn, and Paul Russotto give a panel discussion moderated by Louis Finklestein. School of Fine Arts, 5 E. 89th St. (369-4880); $3.50–$5.

"An Architecture of Desire"—1/28 at 6 P.M.: A discussion of shops designed by modern architects in postwar New York. Discover the forgotten works of Skidmore Owings & Merrill, Frank Lloyd Wright, Morris Lapidus, Eliot Noyes, Richard Meier, Ulrich Franzen and others. Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Ave. between 50th and 51st Sts. (935-3960); $5.

"Design and Style in Edo Japan"—1/28 at 6:30 P.M.: Nicole Coolidge Rousmaniere discusses the new style of design that emerged to accommodate the taste of the samurai elite during the Edo period. Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015); $10.

Marie Howe—1/30 at 2 P.M.: Discussing the poetry of Jane Kenyon. Wave Hill, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave. in the Bronx (718-549-3200); free.

"A Mother's Place"—1/28 at 8 P.M.: With New York *Times* deputy foreign editor Susan Chira, author of *A Mother's Place: Taking the Debate About Working Mothers Beyond Guilt and Blame*. The Parent Child Center of New York Psychoanalytic Society, 247 E. 82nd St. (879-6900); free.

Events

Plant-o-rama—1/26 at 8 A.M.: A free, daylong trade fair for horticultural professionals and garden enthusiasts with lectures, vendors, and plenty of plants to learn about. Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 900 Washington Ave., Brooklyn. Call 827-8035 or 718-622-4433, ext. 319, the day of the show.

The National Black Fine Art Show—1/29–1/31: Forty dealers of traditional African, Caribbean, and African-American paintings, sculpture, photography, and fabric. The Puck Building, Houston and Lafayette Sts. (301-564-6602); $12.

Vintage Fashion and Antique Textile Show—1/29–1/31: Fabulous clothing and cloth from days gone by, just waiting to be fashionable once more. The Metropolitan Pavilion, 110 W. 19th St. (463-0200, ext. 236); $5–$15.

Happening In an attempt to start the new year with a bang, the 92nd Street Y is bringing out the biggest gun they can find: Nobel laureate Toni Morrison, reading from her latest, *Paradise*, on February 1 at 8 P.M.

Exhibitions

"Treasure-House of Books"—Through 2/6: An array of manuscripts and early printed books, many illuminated, from the collection of Duke August of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. The Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St. (838-6690); free.

"Shaker Gifts, Shaker Genius"—Through 4/2: Ce ebrating the history and artistic and cultu legacy of the American Shakers, an exhibiti of religious objects, documents, histori prints, photographs, and objects for everyd living. PaineWebber, 1285 Sixth Ave. (71 2885); free.

"America and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954–1968" Through 3/19: Rarely seen and classic ph tographs by Ben Fernandez, Bruce Davidso Declan Haun, Nat Herz, James Karales, Char Moore, Eve Arnold, and others. 92nd St. Y, 13 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); free.

"Woody Allen's Television Days"—Through 3/21: screening of Allen's television work on vari and late-night talk shows. The Museum of Te vision & Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-680 $3–$6.

"New York's Finest: A History of the New York City Pol Department"—Through 3/21: Enter this 3,00 square-foot exhibition of early-nineteenth-cent ry police memorabilia through a "dark alley" ech ing with screams and gunshots that evoke the da gers of policing New York in Colonial times. T New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. (87 3400); $5.

"Japonism in Fashion: Japan Dresses the West" Through 2/14: More than 70 costumes and acc sories dating from the second half of the ni teenth century to the present day. The exhibiti explores the influence of Japanese aesthetic pri cipals, art, and design on Western fashion. Broc lyn Museum of Art, 200 Eastern Pkwy. (718-63 5000); $1.50–$4.

"In Thy Map Securely Saile"—Through 3/20: O hundred nautical charts, manuals of instruction the arts of oceanic navigation and compass u and decorative maps used as cartographic illust tion. New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42 St. (221-7676); free.

"Seinfeld's Diner"—Through 8/1: The set of the mous diner frequented by Jerry, Kramer, Elai and George is on display along with props a costumes. American Museum of the Moving I age, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-78 0077); $4.50–$8.50.

GAME WEEK

HOME ● AWAY ●

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
RANGERS		WAS MSG 6:30PM		CAR MSG 6:30PM		DET MSG 7PM	
ISLANDERS		BOS METRO 7:30PM			PHO FSNY 7PM	OTT FSNY 6:30PM	
DEVILS		OTT FSNY 7PM		BOS FSNY 6:30PM		NAS FSNY 12:30PM	
	1/25	1/26	1/27	1/28	1/29	1/30	1/31

Photograph by Deborah Feingold/Outl

Sports

k Boxing 101—Learn how to open a can of Ken- ıcky Whup-Ass from light-heavyweight kick- oxing champion Olando Rivera at the Church t. Boxing Gym (our 1998 "Best Boxing Gym" ick). Classes meet twice a week for five weeks; e is $250 (all-inclusive). Call 571-1333 for ore info.

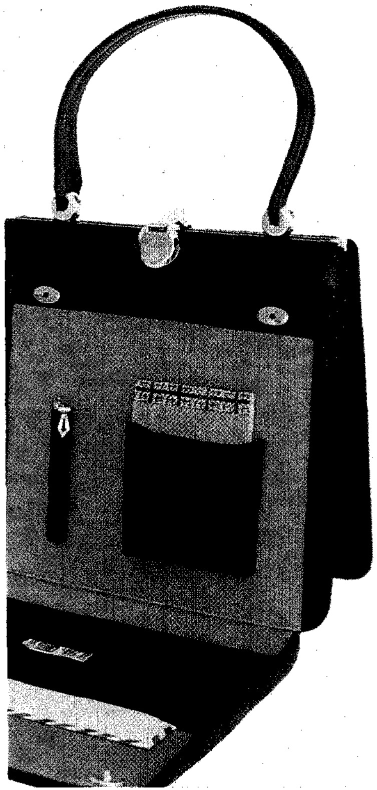
Online

ı York Magazine on the Web—Click from Stephanie's Surf Report" (in the "Today" sec- on of www.newyorkmag.com) to a new Website ach weekday. This week: Find out what all the 1P3 hoo-ha is about; support the online preser- ation of street art (you know, graffiti) at @149st; reate and cavort with some "things" from Thing- Vorld; get more shopping deals through click- ıg; and plan every detail of your kid's next party ith Partymakers.com. But before you click away om us at www.nymag.com, browse through all ur other great features, like selected articles from e current issue and an expanded "Cue" section, lus Web exclusives like daily deals from Angie laximo in "Cheap Thrills," "First Words" for bib- ophiles, "Ask Gael" restaurant tips, and a daily lew York-trivia contest.

appening

Old Bag of Tricks

e folks who brought you years of hap- trolling through the Chelsea antiques a market turn their attention to wear- le collectibles with the Vintage Fash- and Antique Textile Show at the etropolitan Pavilion, which promises rything from the rare sixties "Desk- Organizer Handbag" (pictured) to eteenth-century Japanese fabrics. art making space in your closet.



Wolff *continued from page 21*

Dowd's relationships fascinates many at the *Times.* That she doesn't really do relationships—at least not openly—is what's fascinating. At the Washington *Star* (twenty years ago), she went out with John Tierney, now also at the *Times.* That ended badly, when, as she claimed in a pseudonymously published magazine piece, she found a little black dress not her own.

When she showed up with Michael Douglas at Ben and Sally's (i.e., Bradlee and Quinn's) twentieth-anniversary party, it was notable not so much for the celebrity factor as it was for the fact that Dowd had a date. Instead of lingering at the fringes of the crowd and huddling with her friends, as she is famous for doing, she was openly mingling and introducing Douglas to colleagues. "She was," says a *Times* friend who was at the party, "a different Maureen."

Since then, there's been speculation that it's Douglas's influence that has gotten her to include Starr and the Republicans within her circle of ire (Dowd's attack on Starr was so vicious that Starr's wife publicly rose to defend his honor); and, it's been suggested, Douglas has fostered, through Dowd, a lessening of hysteria on Raines's editorial page toward Clinton. If true, we might be in for it when Douglas fails to hide someone's little black dress.

Op-ed columns are judged, at least at the *Times,* on significantly more than just writing skills. It is perfectly possible within the *Times* to understand that someone can write boring or erratic or hysterical columns and still be thought of as an important columnist. Stature as a *Times* columnist has more to do with which way the wind is blowing at the *Times.* During the era of Reston, Tom Wicker, and Cyrus Sulzberger, what was valued was important gray-haired men who could break the news of what the world's other important gray-haired men were thinking. In some sense, the exact opposite is at a premium now. Like Dowd, Arthur Jr., who controls and runs the paper (and who is far more involved in editorial matters than his father was), does not see himself as an insider. Like Dowd, he sees glamorous insiders as trivial, craven, and tawdry, focusing his anger (like Dowd, he's quick to attack: "That's guy's an asshole," "That guy's a jerk") on the glitzy, the elite, the hoity-toity, the Hamptons, the Vineyard. The current of opinion, some say, runs from Sulzberger to Raines to Dowd. They are the new voice of the *Times.*

And they're not going to take it anymore. ■

E-mail: michael@burnrate.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles

B	■	A	■	F	■	A	■	C	■	S	■	G	■	B
E	M	B	R	O	I	D	E	R	■	P	E	A	C	E
D	■	N	■	R	■	V	■	A	■	R	■	R	■	H
A	V	O	C	A	D	O	■	C	H	I	A	N	T	I
N	■	R	■	Y	■	C	■	K	■	N	■	E	■	N
D	A	M	E	■	F	A	R	S	I	G	H	T	E	D
B	■	A	■	M	■	A	■	■	■	B	■	■	■	T
R	E	L	I	A	N	T	■	A	B	O	L	I	S	H
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A	R	T	Y	C	R	A	F	T	Y	■	O	P	U	S
K	■	U	■	H	■	S	■	I	■	U	■	E	■	C
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A	■	S	■	A	■	U	■	O	■	H	■	I	■	N
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S	A	V	O	I	R	■	D	O	C	■	A	T	A	L	E	■	R	O	P	E
O	N	A	S	S	I	S	■	W	A	D	■	A	D	E	N	■	T	M	E	N
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L	O	N	I	■	N	E	E	D	S	■	D	I	P	■	S	A	B	I	N	E
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kids

Radio...Reef Knot...*Rapunzel*

Children's Events

Open Invitation—Tickets to many of the city's cultural riches—from the National Symphony at Carnegie Hall to the Shanghai Circus at the New Victory Theater—cost only $5 for students in junior and senior high school through **HIGH 5**. Tickets go on sale 1/29. Pick up a catalogue at public libraries, at Ticketmaster outlets, or by calling HI-5-TKTS; e-mail: info@high5tix.org., or visit the Website at www.high5tix.org.

Watermelon Patch—Bill Gordh, a popular children's recording artist with something of a cult following—whose wonderful songs are part story, and whose stories are so engrossing you hardly notice they are part song—returns to **CAROLINES KIDS KLUB**. 1/30 and 1/31 at 2. 1626 Broadway, between 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). $12. Reservations required.●

Profiles in Paper—Museum educators will help kids (ages 6 through 12) make silhouettes of themselves in a workshop called "Self-Portraits in Black" at the **MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK**. 1/30 from 2 to 4. Space is limited to 25 participants. Fifth Ave. and 103rd St. (534-1672, ext. 257). Suggested contributions are $5, $4 for seniors, students, and children, and $10 for families.●

Seeking Sleepy, Grumpy, and Happy—The Missoula Children's Theatre holds auditions—among children in kindergarten through twelfth grade—for parts in a production of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,* 2/1 at 4. Performances at **BROOKLYN COLLEGE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS** will be 2/5 at 10:15 and noon. (Rehearsals will be 2/2 through 2/4). Walt Whitman Theater, on the campus of Brooklyn College (one block from the intersection of Flatbush and Nostrand Avenues.) For further information, call 718-951-4600, ext. 25. ●

Ahoy—Weekend afternoons from 1 to 4 at the **SOUTH STREET SEAPORT**, a landlubber can work toward attaining a Seaport Sailor Certificate by learning certain simple nautical skills such as how to furl a sail. Children's Center, 165 John St. (748-8757). Free with museum admission: regular $6, $5 for seniors, $4 for students, and $3 for children. Call for information about the after-school arts crew and the opportunity (in April) to ride aboard a working tugboat.

Haste Makes Waste—Puppetworks' life-size marionettes perform "The Tortoise and the Hare," along with several other Aesop's fables, in the intimate **LENNY SUIB PUPPET PLAYHOUSE**. 1/30 and 1/31, at 10:30 and noon. Asphalt Green's Mazur Theater, 555 East 90th St (369-8890, ext. 159).

Diversity at Home—The **PARENTS LEAGUE** sponsors a free public forum on some of the issues interfaith families face. 1/28 from 6 to 7:30. Brick Presbyterian Church, 62 East 92nd St. Reservations are required (737-7385).●●

Rock, Paper, Scissors—Paper Bag Players' newest laugh-out-loud show, "Hot Feet," a collection of twelve short sketches, is all about city life with honking cars and talking tenements. Hunter College's **SYLVIA AND DANNY KAYE PLAYHOUSE**, 68th St. and Park Ave. (772-4448). Saturdays and Sundays through 3/7, at 2. Tickets are $15 and $20.

Letting the Hair Down—Puppets at **MISS MAJESTY'S LOLLIPOP PLAYHOUSE** stage *Rapunzel,* weekends at 1:30 (through 3/7), and *The Emperor's New Clothes,* weekends at 3:30 (both productions continue through 3/7). Grove Street Playhouse, 39 Grove Street (741-6436). Tickets are $8.

Alice Underground—Boston's Underground Railway Theater takes Alice, now a working mother, on a return trip to a childhood place she once visited—the dimly-remembered land of the Red Queen and the Mad Hatter. 1/31 at 3. The **PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**. Purchase College, 735 Anderson Hill Road, Purchase, New York (914-454-3388). Tickets are $11 to $16.

The Right Moves—Among the dance pieces in Doug Elkins Dance Company's "Step Lively: Dance at The New Victory" are "The Testosterone Diversions," an outrageous display of machismo, and "More Wine for Polyphemus," with pirouetting and break-dancing to the music of Handel, James Brown, and Led Zeppelin. 1/28 through 1/31. The **NEW VICTORY THEATER**, 209 W 42nd Street (239-6200). $10.●

Ground Rules:

● = free

● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

C U

Barbara Ensor
Kids

Patricia Falvo
Movies

Brian Farnham
Sports

Nick Meyer
In Concert

Ariel Levy
Books
Events
Radio

John Leonard
Television

Edith Newhall
Art

Robin Raisfeld
Restaurants

Stephanie Saulmo
Online

Jennifer Senior
Theater

Ethan Smith
Nightlife

Broadcast
Making Waves

"We're live, so go turn off your TV!" is the opening battle cry of WNYC's "New York Kids," delivered over the AM airwaves each week by one of the pair of kids who will be hosting the radio show. Members of a "class of the week," who are in the same fourth-to-sixth-grade age group as the audience, also weigh in with commentary and reviews of movies, games, or whatever has caught their eye. During a recent science segment with the Dirtmeister, a regular o the program, kids listening at home were asked to fish ice cubes out of the freezer for an experimen that shed some light on the sinking of the *Titanic.* But according to producer Lou Giansante, listener always say the reason they tune in is because "we let kids talk on the radio." And how rare it is, a eavesdropping adult will notice, to hear youngsters actually discussing things that matter to them—cliques in school, how to handle that kid who carries a box cutter, whether there is a God—without th nearest adult reflexively jumping in to volunteer what they ought to think. Regular adult hosts Davi Gonzalez and Florence Barrau manage to encourage conversation without steering it. Parents, fortunately, have not criticized the sometimes controversial views that get expressed on the show. But, say Giansante, "they do sometimes cringe at how much current pop music we play." The bias definitel puts N' Sync way above Mozart—though both do get airtime. And now that the New York listening audience has a chance to hear what real top-40 family programming sounds like—on Radio Disne WQEW-AM 1560, which went on the air in New York City just after Christmas—grumbling on tha subject may quiet down. WQEW gives ou an attention-grabbing $1,000 in priz money each month to a kid wh makes an outstanding contribution t his or her community. But only o public radio's WNYC can yo hope to hear the sound o one 10-year old tap-dancing in front of her bedroo mirror—recorded over phone line from Queens (Sundays from 6 to 8 P.M on WNYC-AM 820.

BARBARA ENSO

Abramsky *continued from page 72*

Lower East Side. He sold out his share in 1988. “I was in my forties, and I was tired of partying,” he says.

Then, in 1990, Sweeney was living on the top floor of a Greene Street building that he owned with three other people. A Pritzker-family-owned company was planning to build a hotel in a parking lot on West Broadway between Prince and Houston—right in his backyard. “It was going to be a thirteen-story building blocking my nice westward view,” says Sweeney. “I heard the SoHo Alliance was fighting it, so I got involved.” Finally, because of the community protests and because the real-estate market collapsed, the hotel was shelved.

After that fracas, Sweeney became a stalwart supporter of Freed’s, campaigning for her in 1991 and every election since then. Now 53, he leads the Alliance, is a member of Community Board Two (a Freed appointee), and is president of the politically powerful Downtown Independent Democrats, a group indispensable to anyone seeking election to public office in the area. “And all because I didn’t want a hotel going up,” he says. Activism has become Sweeney’s full-time job, and politicians have come to realize that Sweeney is a force to be reckoned with. “Right now, I have a call in to the borough president,” he says. “I’m not going to say ‘I helped you get elected, Virginia Fields.’ But I *was* the downtown coordinator in ’97 for her election campaign.”

THESE LOCAL ACTIVIST ORGANIZATIONS and boards are the new Democratic machines. State Senator Tom Duane and City Council members Kathryn Freed, Margarita Lopez, and Ronnie Eldridge are just a few who ran for higher office after serving on community boards—their work whetting their appetites for public service, and, perhaps, the spotlight. Jennifer Raab, chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, is also a board alumna. Even the city’s Planning Commission chair, Joseph Rose, was chair of Community Board Five from 1985 to 1988, spending much of his time fighting the Koch administration’s plans for the development of Columbus Circle.

“If you don’t have a political party to use as a tool, you have to find other inroads to the system,” says Kathryn Freed. “And the community boards are a good way in. Instead of the old ward boss dealing with problems, you now have the community board.” With her term running out in the year 2001, Freed is now thinking public advocate, and she’s about to start fund-raising. “I wish we didn’t have term limits,” she says, sighing. “There’ll be a complete turnover. This is the first paid political position I’ve had.” Freed was among the first to sense the power shift in 1989, after the city got rid of the Board of Estimate. “In the past, people went to borough presidents or the Board of Estimate if they had problems. Now the power is with the council. We vote on land use and the budget. So we’re a real legislative body. Community boards are now making demands on local council members.” Freed admits that some people in her district seem to think she’s evolved from community activist into a hack politician. That hurts. “God knows, we don’t do this to get rich,” she says. “We do it because we’re *interested*. Sometimes I think I should have been a professional busybody.”

NIGHTCLUBS ARE A BUSINESS THAT GET ALL these newly minted politicos excited. For public-relations purposes, if nothing else, nightclubs are now spending a lot of time placating everybody. Robert Bookman, chief counsel for the New York Nightlife Association, says the association urges all of its members—who are mainly nightclub owners—to set up 24-hour hot lines so activists can voice their complaints.

Nightclub operator Peter Gatien—acquitted last year on drug charges but now facing two months in jail for tax evasion—doesn’t need any more problems than he already has. He has his staff sweep the stretch of Sixth Avenue outside his recently reopened nightclub, Limelight. Gatien also forked over $10,000 to a sound company that checked the building out before installing extra doors and soundproofing seals.

Sitting at a table on the top floor of Limelight, Gatien is surrounded by eerie blue murals of zaftig women and peace symbols—the work of local artists. The club owner and two of his full-time “community liaisons” explain how modern dancers are using the space for rehearsals during the day and are paying the club back by performing there at night. (No, not as go-go dancers.) Limelight has already staged Molière, and Mamet is on the way, says Gatien, as are puppet shows. Gatien makes sure to mention that on Easter, there will be a wholesome egg hunt at the onetime church.

Clearly, Gatien’s pumping the soft pedal. His arch-nemesis is Community Board Five member Laura Michaels. She has been “relentless” in her attacks in the press, says Gatien. Gatien’s liquor license is up for renewal, and in spite of his turbo-schmoozing and concessions to culture, the local board doesn’t want that to happen.

Sympathy for club owners is in short supply. Whereas kickbacks once went to the police and license-granting agencies, some nightclub and restaurant owners have been known to placate complaining residents by paying their rent or their utility bills. “Tenants ask for straight-up cash,” says one nightclub owner. “Clubs are in a very vulnerable position. The standards the city is holding clubs to means we’re responsible for virtually anything a patron does in the establishment. If they applied these same standards to Madison Square Garden, Yankee Stadium, or the public schools, they’d all be closed.”

AFTER SOME PAINSTAKING RESEARCH, KEITH Galloway’s Chelsea block association discovered that 217 West 20th Street—a former sign-maker’s shop—hadn’t had a phone number since 1991. Galloway says that means the ground floor should revert to being residential space, since a business hadn’t been operating there for two consecutive years. With Jack Lester, Galloway and company are preparing to file suit with the Board of Standards and Appeals. To raise money for Lester’s fee, the activists have been auctioning off household items—jewelry, old clocks, even a movie camera—on eBay, the online auction site.

Lester is also representing the tenants who live above J.E.T. 19, a Bali-motif bar at 19 Cleveland Place run by a British entrepreneur named Andrew Sasson and his American partner, Greg Brier. Georgette Fleischer, a doctoral student at Columbia University and a building resident, says she’s slowly losing her mind from sleep deprivation: “We are a little tenement building. We live in this little doll’s house, and suddenly this giant downstairs is rocking the rafters.”

The campaign has already borne fruit. In August, harried by ongoing protests and facing the prospect of permanent litigation, J.E.T.’s owners started preparing to evacuate. Their attorney contacted Lester and offered to move the lounge to a new venue if they could sign their lease at 19 Cleveland Place over to another business. Now all that remains is for a new *acceptable* commercial tenant to be chosen. So far, none has emerged, but the offer still stands. “We have to wait and see,” Lester declares, not wanting to jinx his victory. “If we could get a restaurant-slash-bar in here that’s a quieter establishment, we’d be doing okay,” he says. “But the tenants only want a restaurant. And that’s holding things up.” He sighs.

Not surprisingly, Kathryn Freed is also on the case. People don’t want to stroll around outside with her anymore, she confesses. “Every building we pass, I say, ‘See that building? This is a problem.’ Every empty lot: ‘See that empty lot? This is a problem.’ My staff is *so* overworked.”

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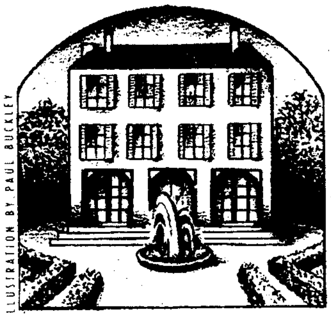

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Infinite Possibilities—This 33-year-old, single white male is looking for a fun-loving counterpart who'll understand my lively sense of humor and share my love for fine wine and exquisite dining. I'm 6', handsome and in-shape. You are Ms. Right, not Ms. Alright - beautiful, intelligent and spiritually centered. You share my interests in global affairs, diverse forms of music, art, travel, reading and scuba diving. If I've just described you, then send a photo along with a brief note. Unlimited adventure awaits. 6930 ✉ ☎

Slim, Very Pretty, Successful Blond—Very fit, divorced, very young 50. An easy laugh. Sensual and feminine, with an athlete's love of speed/challenge: climbed Kilimanjaro, trekked Himalayas, bikes, skis. Politically astute, classically elegant. Enjoys concerts, museums, weekends in Paris. Seeks attractive, successful, fit man, sophisticated, passionate, adventurous. Photo. 6878 ✉☎

Jewish Business Professional—PhD, 54, seeks attractive Jewish woman. Photo/note/phone, please. 6918 ✉

Controversial Publisher—Who is a 62 year old fat man looking for love in all the wrong places. Seeking a pretty and bright companion, slender, 30s, 40s or 50s ...for coach-fare trips to share his four homes: NYC (tiny), Pompano FL (huge), LA and Holland (average). If you want to respond, please send photo. 6935 ✉

Do You Have A Twinkle In Your Eye?—Are you a man who is comfortable with yourself but not complacent? I'm looking for someone a lot like me - genuinely nice, caring, warm, with quiet confidence, energy, a sense of humor, brains and enthusiasm. I'm attractive and fit and would like you to be too. I'm proud of my life; my kids are terrific, my work is stimulating and rewarding, my relationship with friends and family is a wonderful gift. I enjoy sharing wonderful meals, terrific music, great movies, walking and hiking. I can also laugh at myself while learning new things. I'll never stop being excited about growing and would love to find a companion who shares that too. If you're between 45 and 55 and interested - drop me a note with a recent photo, or call. I'm taking a chance and hope you will also. 6853 ✉☎

Interested In Meeting—A young, tall bachelor, newly full-time in NYC? I'm 32, European background - American-raised, light brown hair, blue-green eyes, 6' plus, 185, fit, striking features, very attractive and very successful businessman, articulate, energetic, easygoing, refined, worldly and happy. I am bright, fair-minded, honest, and a distinguished, single Jewish gentleman. I'm interested in meeting a young, single, spectacular, beautiful and provocative woman who likes good friends, great events, city excitement, travel, beaches, horses, skis, fashion and arts, and is looking for someone like me. Be assured - the reluctance is mutual, and know, if we do have the chance to speak and subsequently meet, I'll arrive as advertised. 6852 ✉

Romantic, Passionate Ivy MD/PhD—A communicative, supportive, really nice guy with humor, good looks - 5'10", muscular, 43 - zest for life, travel, fun, seeks a lifelong romance with female counterpart, affectionate, under 37, bright. Phone/photo a must. 6928 ✉ ☎

Beautiful, Bright, Beguiling—Long-haired strawberry blond, sensuous, slim, sincere, articulate, witty, accomplished, unencumbered, classy, in-shape, NY, tennis lover. Seeking handsome, successful, fun, sincere, communicative male counterpart, 48-60. Note/photo. 6854✉☎

Sexy And Intelligent—Beautiful 5'10" blond, financially secure, whose priorities are family, living a healthy and positive quality life. Seeks nonsmoking, balanced, secure, genuinely kind man (45-60) who wants a real woman for friendship and passion. Photo/phone. 6902 ✉

Extraordinary Multimillionaire—I am extremely handsome, tall, great body, exceptional athlete, nonsmoker, never married, self-made, single white male, 42. I am generous, considerate, romantic, upscale yet fun and enjoy travel, scuba, boating, skiing, jazz, candlelit dinners and romance. You are truly an extraordinarily beautiful, single white female, under 34, with a well-built and slender, athletic figure, interested in an exclusive, generous, respectful and mutually beneficial relationship with a truly exceptional man. Full photo or headshot/description a must (will exchange). 6887 ✉

Creative And Spontaneous—Handsome man of 30 welcomes a similar woman... One who soars through life's air and dives into the depths of living. 6914 ✉

Looking For An Uncommon Man—Attractive blond female, 40, idealistic, attorney, warm, adventuresome, playful, sensitive, communicative, psychologically aware, passionate about city/country pursuits. Seeks kind, fit, intellectually curious Jewish man, 35-45, with a social conscience, who loves kids, for committed relationship. Descriptive note/phone. 6920 ✉

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Handsome, Loving Professional—Jewish, 48, great sense of humor, 5'8", fit, looks like Kevin Kline - desires slim/athletic, attractive, sincere woman for a monogamous relationship. Photo. 6859✉

Handsome, Successful Gay White Man—40s, in good health, good shape and good spirit, seeks to find similar man interested in serious relationship. I enjoy life in New York, travel, food, music and intellectual pursuits. Looking to find that mature, intelligent someone who maintains his sense of humor and boyish excitement about life. Please, no hangups about prior relationships, no career crisis or other significant emotional traumas that are unresolved. Would like to meet someone in their 30s-40s, good-looking, who enjoys life at home and beyond with a good mind and spirit. Reply only to note and photo. 6862 ✉

Tall, Handsome Professional—Very fit, financially secure, integrity, sensitivity, character - late 40s. Open to commitment. Seeking intelligent, tall (5'7"-5'10"), beautiful, curvaceous yet slim partner, age 28-40. Common interests might include ballroom dancing, exotic travel, desire for a soul mate connection, open to marriage if all goes well. You might like art, tennis, swimming, investing and sensual massage. A cornucopia of delights awaits a caring, imaginative woman with the above attributes and interests. Photo. 6931 ✉

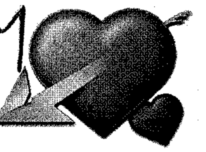
Meet For Coffee?—Pretty professional woman, 42, seeks kind, smart, handsome man, 38-48. 6857 ✉

Japanese, Long-Haired, Grace, Funny—Very attractive, self-made CEO, 39, 5'4", seeks other half: handsome, high-profiled yet cute law firm partner or Morgan Stanley VIP-type, 29-55, very stylish, refined, humorous. Enjoy East Side penthouse, grand piano, Paris for romantic dinners (or I'll cook!). 6910 ✉

Seeking My Soul Mate—Single Jewish man, boyish-looking 40, warm, sentimental and playful, seeks a smart, spirited woman for lasting romance. Pleasures range from the serious (opera, linguistics, philosophy) to the pedestrian (well, I love to walk) to the downright silly (no confessions in print). Will take an average or Rubenesque build over the "waif" look any day, but a kind and generous spirit is the only sine qua non. Photo appreciated (not required). 6919 ✉ ☎

Cute, Sexy, Bright—Young lady, 30, upbeat, outgoing and energetic, seeks a smart, funny guy under 40, who is fun to go out with and eventually nice to come home to. Note/photo/phone. 6938 ✉

Looking For A Super Mom—With one child - but would like more children. I am a very handsome, 42-year-old, GQ-type man with sincerity and great values. My financial success is a bonus to enjoy life to the fullest (beach house and FL home). I would like to meet a NYC, tall, beautiful, sexy, well-educated, in-great-shape mom who is ready for the man you thought wasn't ever going to show up. Please respond with photo and note; will exchange before meeting. 6895 ✉



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Passionate, Attractive—Independent, single white female, 43, thrives on good runs, good food, good wine and the NY skyline (particularly from the River Cafe). Loves the theater, playing in the snow and sun, and watching movies from a theater's front row. Seeks an equal: single white male, 38-48, with a smile that matches his charisma. Note/photo. 6933 ✉

Handsome, Intelligent—Attorney, 36, residing on Upper East Side, looking for smart, independent and warm woman for romance, possible serious relationship. I love European traveling, cooking, laughing, art and exploring. Seeking pretty female (25-37) with a good heart, lots of love and humor to share, and a sense of adventure! Note/photo. 6903 ✉☎

Forget The '98s, I'm A '99—Exceptional lady in great shape, bright, beautiful, Jewish, spirited. Elegant, casual, sexy but classy seeks fit, educated, successful male, 45-50s. Phone/photo. 6932 ✉ ☎

Very Fit, Handsome, 41—Single white male, full-time professional guy who works with kids, part-time blues guitarist and world's greatest uncle, seeks slim, athletic 28-38-year-old woman who'd look great in my leather bomber jacket. Photo. 6898 ✉

Had It All, Lost It All (Everything)—All I have left to offer is lots of affection and TLC. Handsome, lonely Jewish man, 59, seeks female friend. Very detailed letter (photo). 6886 ✉

Nick Nolte/John Tesh Combo—36, handsome, tall professional who's upbeat, generous and leading man type. Enjoys the outdoors, the arts and more. Seeking professional, 30s woman who's happy, intelligent, pretty, slim and ready for happily ever after. Note/photo. 6913 ✉

Great Guy—Seeks great woman to enjoy all that life in NYC has to offer. I'm 43, handsome, athletic, successful, considerate and good company. You be fun-loving, sincere, professional and with a good sense of humor. 6924 ✉

The Unusual Female—52, professional, fit, bilingual (German), artist, looking for male partner from same planet: loving to love/be loved, chat, cook, travel, play. Enjoy family/friends, the arts, country house (she), city house (he). Photo/bio. 6869 ✉ ☎

Cute, Smart, Articulate—In-shape, middle-aged theater man, nondesperately seeks an artistic, funny, fit, good-looking woman of wit and wisdom, for banter and folderol. Photo and note. 6865 ✉

Nice-Looking Man—Professional, warm, youthful, trim, 5'10", 57 - seeks a down-to-earth, stimulating, slender woman for friendship and romance. I love the arts, music, films, travel...or just a good conversation. Photo, please. 6855 ✉

New Year's 2000 Date—Pretty writer seeks date, and since restaurants are booking early, let's reserve our table for two. If the Y2K problem materializes, at least we'll have someone fun to cuddle with when the city grinds to a halt. My ideal New Year's Eve man is Jewish, 40ish, fit, kind, passionate, witty, sharp, creative, soulful, happy with himself and has a weakness for petite, sweet yet at times sarcastic, sparkling-eyed brunettes. Make my millennium, please. 6929 ✉ ☎

The Answer To Your Dreams By Day—And fantasies by night (or vice versa) might be this young 60ish redhead lover of arts. You're a secure man, 60-70. Note/photo. You'll not be disappointed. 6861 ✉

What Can You Offer—A 49-year-old, in-shape, Jewish, successful, 5'7", slim, funny, sensitive, generous, handsome, West Side bon vivant man? I'd like to know. Photo/note. 6882 ✉

Stalwart Gent—Single, Jewish, successful business exec, mature yet quite active, 5'9 1/2", 190 lbs, masculine-looking. Seeking a romantic encounter of endless duration with a trim, sensual, top-drawer female of any age. Brooklyn-Queens resident only. Photo/note. 6858 ✉

Financially Secure, Tall, Low-Key—Sensitive, retired professional, youthful 64, seeks Jewish or secular Christian, younger, educated Jersey lady, 5'9" plus, mentally and physically strong. 6851 ✉☎

A Sure Thing—Very attractive white male, 37, with herpes (infrequent), who is romantic, affectionate, adventurous, intelligent, loyal, congenial, seeks very attractive, slender, accomplished female for friendship, possible long-term relationship. Age not important. 6870 ✉☎

That Girl—Pretty, slender, sophisticated yet sweet, mid 30s, loves the arts and travel. Great resume but want to cook for successful, mid-late 30s, Ivy-type guy over 5'9", who loves the Alps, Nantucket and his family. I adore true boyish charm and you admire a woman with integrity, style and great friends. 6885 ✉

Elegant West Village Woman—With cosmopolitan flair - beautiful, sexy, successful, savvy and "surprisingly" 50 - this green-eyed redhead is vivacious, nurturing and spontaneous, loves to laugh and banter, is seeking 45-55, handsomely "quirky", accomplished, passionate, intelligent and fun-loving male to share it all with... You'll never be bored. 6925 ✉☎

Marriage-Minded—Seeking that special woman (under 35) who, like me, is well-educated, financially secure, single and child-free but wants to have several kids. She takes marriage vows seriously (divorce is not an option), believes family comes first - integrity essential. Uninhibited, buxom pluses. I'm a one-woman, adventurous businessman, 6', 175 lbs. Photo a must. 6907 ✉

Physically Fit Male—33, MA degree, successful, Yankee fan, seeks intelligent, active, slim, single white female. 6900 ✉ ☎

Almost Indescribable—Fun, smart, sensual, great-looking, slim, curly strawberry blond, single Jewish female, navy-blue eyes, lots more smiles than frowns. Offbeat, witty humor, great one-liners. Music lover. Warm, playful, genuine. Enjoys biking, Colorado, building sand-castles, picnics, dancing. Seeks mature, fun, attractive, 28-43 man. 6892 ✉ ☎

Blond Beauty—Blue eyes, petite RN, 49, (looks 35), seeks 5'9"-6'2", fit, younger, nonsmoking man. Possible marriage-minded. Please, note/photo. 6888 ✉

Gay White Male—52, seeking someone to build a life together, dinner, weekends away and more. Sincerity and humor important. Note/phone number. 6874 ✉

Herpes—31, fun, smart, good-looking, white professional male seeks similar single female. Photo/note, please. 6926 ✉☎

European Redhead—Attractive, shapely, Jewish, seeks tall, intelligent, sophisticated man, 40-50, to love and cherish. 6880 ✉

Great Smile—Sits on this pretty face attached to a slim, curvaceous body, with bubbly personality, bright, ongoing curiosity, affluent professional, 52, Jewish. Must fall passionately in love with you - a 53-65, sincere, genuine counterpart. Note/photo. 6879 ✉ ☎

A Winning Combination—Tall, blond, blue-eyed Jewish female in mid 30s, who loves to cook, travel, enjoys theater and movies, impressed with character, personality and "a touch of class". Seeking male. Note/photo, please. 6934 ✉

Tall, Lanky, Affable—Romantic, clear-eyed, divorced man, 50. Literate, perceptive, dependable, never at a loss for words. Artist, ambitious, cartoonist, comic. Wry, whimsical, spontaneous. Values personal growth. More museum/movie-going than outdoorsy - does kayak, swim. A few favorites: weekend breakfasts, Wallace and Gromit, gardening, R. Crumb, cats, photography, ideas, the Southwest, toys, even shopping. Seeks smart, educated, trim woman, 35-50. 6890 ✉ ☎

Let's Love Again—I'm 52, pretty, vivacious, independent, multifaceted, Jewish, worldly, warm, witty, fit and fun. Are you the right man for me? 6905 ✉ ☎

Beautiful, Independent Jewish Lady—5'5", 120 lbs, 50 - looks 40, acts 30, seeks 50s man with similar attributes, only taller. Let's play. Photo letter. 6909 ✉

Attractive, Successful Entrepreneur—Seeks intelligent, sexy woman, 25-34, with passion for life. I'm 5'9", 190 lbs, big brown eyes, nice teeth, great sense of humor. I play piano, love fine dining, traveling, work out daily (minimum 10 minutes). Let's explore the world together. Here's a hug and a kiss on credit... X/O 6897 ✉ ☎

Looking For A Golfing Lady—If you will be in Palm Beach this season, are 50s to early 60s, and would like to meet a handsome, tall, slim guy who enjoys travel, good dining and is comfortable in jeans or tux... A photo/note much appreciated. 6908 ✉

Striking, Sensual, Sophisticated—Successful honey-blond, 5'7 1/2", brown eyes, trim, creative, energetic, looks 30s, seeks established, tall, smart, charismatic, handsome, fit man, 40-55, secure, romantic, generous, unattached, nonsmoking/nondrinker, passion for life. Note/photo a must. 6906 ✉

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Who Knows—How long I've loved you? Attorney/writer (fictional pieces), 47, kind, funny and attractive, seeks soulful, pretty woman with expressive face - who can make me laugh. Note/ photo appreciated. 6916 ✉ ☎

Handsome Ex-TV Newscaster—Now 40-something businessman and nationally-published writer, seeks 30-something partner with looks and charm. I'm 5'11", athletic, brown hair, hazel eyes. Hobbies: sports, investing, metaphysics. Photo, please. Write: Mr. Businessman, POB 255, Hawthorne, NY 10532

Concert Pianist/College Teacher—51, handsome, sincere, romantic, down-to-earth, nonreligious, seeks attractive, commitment-minded, classical-music-listening 40s woman for true love, hopefully marriage. Photo. LI/NYC. 6921 ✉

NYC Firefighter—(35, 5'10", 170 lbs), seeks attractive lady, 25-36, for possible long-term relationship. Let's talk. Note/ photo. 6884 ✉

Tall, Fit, Educated, Successful—NJ-based, 49-year-old man seeks petite, feminine, warmhearted woman, 33-40, for long term relationship leading to marriage and family. Single moms welcome. Photo requested. 6937 ✉

Chemistry And Laughter—A must for creative, sultry social worker, 30, dark features, 5'4", Jewish, nonreligious, clever, grounded and passionate, into health and fitness. Seeking compassionate, open-minded, secure professional guy, 30-37, with quick wit and heart of gold. Broad shoulders a plus. Photo/letter. 6863✉☎

French Woman—41, pretty, slim, youthful, educated, cosmopolitan joie de vivre, witty, vibrant - would like to share a French romance with a man of similar attributes. Note/photo. 6801 ✉ ☎

A Real Keeper—Single Jewish male, 37, professional, handsome, bright, fun, seeks loving relationship with a genuinely special woman, mid 20s-mid 30s, who is pretty, warm, sensitive, loves to laugh and desires the warmth of a tender touch and a caring heart. Note/photo. 6872 ✉

Hi, Leg Man!—Want to meet a bright, shapely redhead? Call if you are 65-plus, attractive, sensitive and financially secure. Let's dance into the future. 6891✉ ☎

Older Bachelor Seeks—Company of an attractive younger woman in her 30s. I am tall, successful, distinguished-looking company president. Two residences. Like classical music, travel, sailing, reading, museums, riding, restaurants, home cooking and movies. Would like to meet a woman who is slim, medium height, college grad, well-spoken and considerate. Please write only with photo/phone. 6875✉

Tall, Slender, Sexy—Vital, verbal, active and attractive female seeks white male, 50-65. 6922 ✉

I'll Make You Laugh—Make you feel, make you think - and you'll do the same for me. Jewish male, 38, highly intelligent, with an artist's soul and a great sense of humor, warm, emotionally evolved, confident, compassionate, stylish, refined artistic taste. Super good looks, great features, hair and smile and very fit. MD, extraordinarily successful. Loves music, art, adventure, philosophical thought, new ideas, silly fun. Seeks a woman who is intelligent, warm, naturally pretty, fit, emotionally evolved, intriguing, sexy, classy, stylish and kind, to experience the meaningful things in life forever. Photo/note. 6927 ✉

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This New Year you're going to meet many interesting people.

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Beautiful, Sincere, Down-to-Earth—Single (once married, no kids) Jewish female, physician, 35, seeking wonderful, sincere, accomplished, marriage-minded Jewish man for forever. Note/photo. 6868✉

Y2K Team Suggests—I need a sometimes shy, brainy goddess under 38, who wants family, loves travel, homes. Benefits include forever love, laughs and Scarsdale schools. Note/photo/phone. 6923 ✉

My Daughter Says—I need a mensch. Seeking a perfect gentleman. 51-year-young Manhattanite looking for Jewish male to share life's 3 T's (tennis, travel and theater). Let's get together. 6915 ✉☎

What If?—A very pretty brunette female, 32, who's 5'5", athletic/in-shape, professional, down-to-earth, upbeat, nice and happy with life...met you: a similar 30s male who's lived/learned and is now ready to share life's special "Kodak moments"... Note/photo. 6912 ✉

Tall, Dark, Almost Handsome—Athletic, intelligent, professional, passionate, romantic man, 40s, seeks female counterpart. No high-maintenance "Rules" players, princesses, slackers need apply. Brains/great legs a plus. 6856 ✉ ☎

Sophisticate With Soul, Passion—Seeks man of intellect with same. Tall, slim, stunning, 52. (203)/(914)/(212). Pix. 6881✉

Lovely To Look At—Even lovelier to be with. This vivacious, attractive European-Jewish professional with exquisite style, late 40s, who enjoys home life as well as worldly pleasures, would like to meet an accomplished man with integrity and class, ready for new beginnings. Let's spoil each other... Note/photo. 6876 ✉ ☎

Caring, Nurturing—Professional woman, divorced, slim (5'5", 105 lbs), mid 50s, with strong interest in theater, films and dance, seeks compassionate and intelligent man for friendship first. Please be a nonsmoker with a sense of humor and a love of New York. Religion and profession not important if you are a generous and real person. 6849 ✉

Easygoing Young Widower—Handsome, affectionate, unpretentious, looks 45, 5'11", 170, nonsmoking, business-minded, secure - enjoys walks, mountains, beaches, romance, movies, travel, tennis, books. Seeks attractive, affectionate, fun-loving (nonsmoker) soul mate, 35-45. Note/photo, please. 6894 ✉

Successful Entrepreneur—36-year-old, very handsome Jewish professional, 5'11" with athletic build, seeks beautiful, sexy, slim Jewish professional, 24-32, with a good sense of humor. Photo. 6877✉

Slim, 30s—Pretty, educated female seeks man for marriage and kids. 6871 ✉

New—Cyber attorney, cool, grooving musician, ex-deadhead. Call me. 6866✉☎

Beautiful Music Together—Successful Jewish artist/Klezmer musician, 6'2", handsome and fit, seeks tall, curvaceous kindred spirit, 40ish, for harmonious relationship. Photo, please. 6899 ✉ ☎

Answer This Ad—If you are a single Jewish male, 33-43, in search of a sexy, slim, petite, single Jewish female who enjoys traveling, working out and theater. Note/photo, please. 6860 ✉ ☎

Harmonize With Me—Pretty, red-haired female - loves music, dancing, laughter, travel, reading, outdoors. Active, youthful 54. Seek warm, intelligent, liberal-minded, fit male. Age and ethnicity are not issues. Kindness and curiosity are. 6889 ✉ ☎

Eurasian Man—Mid 30s, seeks Eurasian woman who understands the space between two cultures. I appreciate brains, ambition, good values and a loving heart. Beauty is a plus, not a substitute for the above. I am successful, hard-working, physically fit, love winter sports, golf and good music. Looking for the right woman to expand my horizons and give me a reason to leave the office early. Photo, please. 6848 ✉

Trekking in Nepal—Rafting down the Zambezi, impromptu picnicking... laughing, talking, thinking all the while. Bright, sparkling copper-haired female, 38, 5'5", 116. Great family and friends. Seeks partner with curiosity, kindness and humor, who believes in their work. Tell me about a deed that made you proud - and a place you'd love to explore. Include a likeness, please. 6911 ✉

Would Love To Be In Love—Accomplished, single white male, 43, looking to share life with a wonderful woman. I have tremendous spirit - great cook, multilingual, attractive and fit. Love to travel, dine out, laugh and explore. I'm emotionally available and will be there for my partner - seek same in my mate. Join me on a wonderful journey! Ethnicity not important. Note/photo. 6847 ✉

Renaissance Woman—Pretty, thin, petite, down-to-earth, athletic, seeks nonsmoking, intelligent, thoughtful, physically fit man, 45-60, successful in mind, body and spirit. Photo/note, please. 6867✉

I'll Get Over It—Putting an "ad" in was the last thing I thought I'd ever do. But my love for my work, for spending time with good friends and for quiet times alone leaves me no time to meet the funny, accomplished, fit and unencumbered man at mid life (that's 50 or so) I'd like to know. Laughter is the mortar this very attractive, accomplished woman needs to bring together an intrepid, athletic, progressive life style. Public service, intellect, kindness, good books and music help. A recent image and non-nattering note welcome. 6904 ✉

Seeking Gentleman—(To 68), engaged in life, to share social, cultural and physical activities with interesting and good-looking woman. Note, phone, photo(?) please. 6936 ✉

Sunrises—Sailing/motor cruising, the natural world. Friendships and travel adventures sustain me. Loving, romantic, extremely attractive, slim, fit, divorced Jewish female. Generous, warm, genuine. Open-minded, humorous, financially independent. Likes excitement, loves hiking, kayaking, theater. Enjoys sharing someone else's interests. Seeks financially stable, athletic, grounded, 47-62, 5'8"-plus man who has time for a real relationship and laughter. 6893 ✉ ☎

Be With Me—Warmhearted, caring, affectionate, professional, single Jewish female, 35, brunette, 5'4", slim, attractive and has a variety of interests, seeks a kind, sincere, nice-looking, intelligent, single Jewish male, nonsmoker, 33-43, to share and enjoy all aspects of life. Note and photo, please. 6917 ✉

Charming Blue-Eyed Brunette—36, classic good looks, slim and fit, seeks generous, funny and very smart NYC guy, 30-45. Note/photo. 6883 ✉

Desired:—A fine romance - not marriage, by beautiful, successful, slim woman. You are kind, spirited, successful, 50-62. 6845 ✉

Divorced Male Doctor—58, seeks woman of childbearing age and marriage-minded. Photo and letter for response. 6850 ✉

MARY ANN MADDEN #932

NEW YORK MAGAZINE COMPETITION

Theda Bara Browning—vamp, actress, poet.

Edward Albeit—author, "Tiny, 'Though Sturdy, Alice."

H. Pros Perot—perennial candidate for duke of Milan.

Above, the fractured Who's Who. Competitors are invited to supply a brief definition for one familiar if mangled name.

Results of Competition 929, in which you were asked to invent the opening line from an interview with a famous person of fiction or fact.

Report: First-rate, these. Hard to choose one above another. We asked if we could give prizes to all and were told, in a word, no. We have charm but no real power. Most popular targets included: Oprah. The Donald. Dorian Gray. Hamlet. Bill Gates. Also, poorer people: The Competition editor. Vincent Van Gogh. Calista in a restaurant. Hitler (hey, we just work here). And Ishmael. Many many thanks.

First Prizes of two-year subscriptions to New York to:

Alan Greenspan can't understand what all the fuss is about.
Ellen Conford, Great Neck, N.Y.

Former Beach Boy Brian Wilson is still surfing—but these days it's on the Net.
Russell Marlow, N.Y.C.

Claude Monet greets you in his garden, and though it is your first visit somehow everything seems familiar.
Marilyn Crystal, Scarsdale, N.Y.

Runner-up Prizes of one-year subscriptions to New York to:

Mr. Emil Gower, retired pharmacist, reminisces.
Mary Olson, Springfield, Va.

Dick Van Dyke thinks solving murders is just good medicine.
Reed McColm, Pasadena, Calif.

Surprisingly, Sly ordered vegetarian.
Kevin Cuddihy, Fairfax Va.

Faith Prince is pissed.
Philip Carlson, Bronxville, N.Y.

And Honorable Mention to:

I began the—ah—session with Kelsey by saying, "I'm listening."
Don Wigal, N.Y.C.

Bill Gates hates ostentation.
Bill Dwyer, Rochester, N.Y.

Upon the lake did William Gates a stately pleasure dome decree.
Theodore Zavales, Bergenfield, N.J.

Andy Rooney's got a few things on his mind.
Dana Freed, Huntington, N.Y.

For a long time Bill Gates has been a very wealthy man; today, he is also a very angry one.
Heidi Mastrogiovanni, Los Angeles, Calif.

Thandie Newton knows she was born to play Lena Horne.
Mike Olton, Long Beach, Calif.

If Fay Wray can charm a gorilla, think what she can do to you.
Louis B. Raffel, Northbrook, Ill.

If she were a tree, Barbara Walters says, she would be a weeping willow.
Phyllis Levine, Shaker Heights, Ohio

I suggested Lespinasse because I thought Brooke Astor had never been to the St. Regis.
Larry Semon, Palm Springs, Calif.

The end of Emeril Lagasse's patience is near.
Jeff Tenzer, N.Y.C.

Bearing the mark of Pedro Almodóvar, he has moved from delicate libidinous comedy to a robust Zorroesque lineation of comedic libido.
Tom Miller, Sawyerville, Ala.

The great magician was nowhere to be seen.
Ellen Burr, Truro Mass.

The gaunt billionaire refused to shake my hand.
Mark Wolfson, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Star for over half a century, Cyd Charisse definitely has legs.
Lisa Brickey, McConnellsville, N.Y.

Her Royal Highness, Elizabeth, is both virginal and queenly.
Patsy V. Felmet, Wintersvillle, Ohio

Stonewall Jackson, Pearl S. Buck, Dagmar: Now West Virginia has given us wide receiver Randy Moss.
Carl Edge, Clarksburg, W.V.

Anna Wintour took off her shades, made eye contact, and smiled warmly.
Helen Rosenbaum, N.Y.C.

The Marquis smiled as he squeezed my hand.
H. Malone, Olmsted Falls, Ohio

I rose slowly to greet Ms. Theron, careful not to trip over my tongue.
Jeff Brawer, Brookline, Mass.

"I'll have the spaghetti al pomodoro," Tom Wolfe ordered at Campagna: "On second thought, make that gnocchi with white sauce."
Lisa Dolinger, Delray Beach, Fla.

Leopold Bloom is your typical Dublin raconteur.
John O'Byrne, Dublin, Ireland

Crusty, twisted, dripping with cheese; as I stand beside the midtown vendor, eyes tracing the pretzel's slow arc to Aaron Spelling's mouth, I'm left to ponder the diminishing distance between snack and man.
Jon Raskin, N.Y.C.

Tyra doesn't think she is attractive and refuses to look at herself in mirrors or photographs.
Eric Hyman, Fayetteville, N.C.

Jocelyn Wildenstein feels pretty today.
James Hannaham, N.Y.C.

Dennis Rodman held his wife's hand tenderly as we talked.
Max Klein, Towson, Md.

Sisyphus paused to catch his breath.
Anthony Gray, Closter, N.J.

One look into his piercing blue eyes and I forgot all about salad dressing and popcorn.
Elaine Stallworth , New Port Richey, Fla.

Mr. Godot is uncharacteristically punctual.
Simon Moran, Dublin, Ireland

Mike Tyson is hungry.
Heidi Lipton, N.Y.C.

Jumping up and down on the California-king-size mattress of the Chateau Marmont's suite 16—"the one with the rad balcony"—Jennifer Love Hewitt is the very picture of innocent exuberance.
Andrew Gordon, West Hollywood, Calif.

As the millennium approaches, so too does the prime of Jennifer Love Hewitt.
Mark Mullaney, N.Y.C.

Cruise, schmuise—Nicole's making it on her own.
Lawrence Eisenberg, N.Y.C.

From across the room, I could smell her perfume—White Diamonds.
Candy Zakrzewski, Kearny, N.J.

The only thing Victoria Gotti is guilty of is writing great novels.
Norman Charles, N.Y.C.

"As a child I had a weakness for divinity fudge," Sister Teresa confessed.
Jan Streilein, Aiken, S.C.

Alucard turned down a third decaf refill, quipping: "One more and I'll sleep all night!"
Mark Paladini, Sherman Oaks, Calif.

What's so wrong with eating cake?
C. R. Roberts, Tacoma, Wash.

Fred Rogers reaches under his cardigan for a pack of cigarettes and lights one with trembling hands.
Tom Frenkel, Sunnyside, N.Y.

Joseph Stalin is handsome and amazingly fit for a man dead these 45 years.
Rose Mabel, Roseburg, Ore.
sp. ment.: A. Shulman, Sarasota, Fla.

He's probably our most brilliant actor, but Tom Hanks is best at being himself.
J.M. Tribelli, N.Y.C.

Eddie doesn't consider himself a method actor; for him it's all about instinct.
J. Hilburn, Dublin, Ga.

Death never takes a holiday at the office of Dr. Jack Kevorkian.
Elena Bucciano and Marty Edelstein, Brooklyn

As I leaned back on the surprisingly comforting couch, caught in the gaze of Dr. Freud's piercing brown eyes, I began to wonder who was interviewing whom.
J. Bickart, N.Y.C.

"This is gonna be a no-holds-barred interview. I'll answer any questions you've got," O.J. assured me, his handsome face a model of sincerity.
Mike Reiss, Los Angeles, Calif.

Leonardo's half-smile is as intriguing as an earlier namesake's equally famous creation.
Roy C. Dicks, Raleigh, N.C.

For Rivera, adding the "o" at the end was just the beginning.
Elaine G. Amdur, Kingston, Pa.

In her time, Sadie Thompson has had more than her share of psalm-singing sons-of-bitches.
Joseph Emanuele, Forest Hills, Pa.

Jerry Lewis solemnly turned to this interviewer and said, "Dying is easy. Comedy is hard."
Sylvia Rapp, New City , N.Y.

George Steinbrenner reached for the tab.
Louis Laccavole, Wethersfield, Conn.

Frankly, he does give a damn.
B. K. Page, Albuquerque, N.M.

The years have been more than kind to Blondie Bumstead.
Terry Theutlin-Kehoe, Wilmette, Ill.

He took a long, deep drag on his Marlboro and, exhaling with impunity, announced, "I'm the King of the World, and you have exactly five minutes."
Larry Laiken, N.Y.C.

"So you're Larry Laiken."
Stanley Silber, East Hampton. N.Y.

Rules: Postcards, please, typed if possible. **ONE ENTRY ONLY** to Competition Number 932, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022-6999. E-mail to 104700.2563@compuserve.com, **WITH STREET ADDRESS.** Entries must be received by February 5. Editor's decisions are final, and all entries become property of *New York.* Results and winners' names will appear in the March 1 issue.

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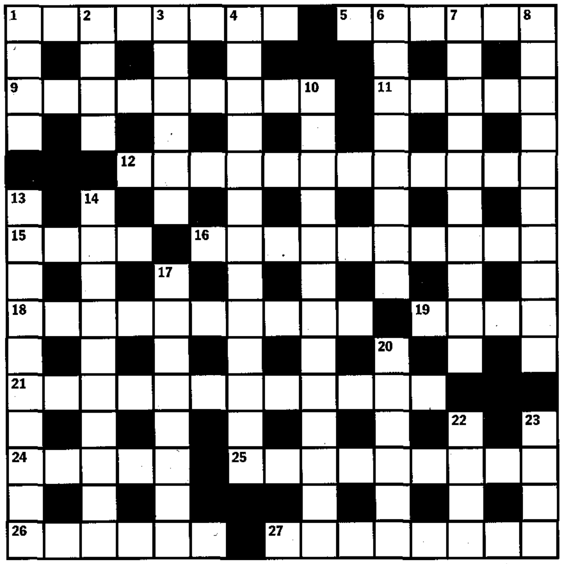
The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS
1 Fly from giving some entertainment to the queue? (4,4)
5 (In Spenser) stony or maze: no dust wanted. (6)
9 Lady of Waugh's came across paladin. (9)
11,1D *The last trump? I fomented* trouble. (3,2,4)
12 In which one learns to bow and scrape? (6,6)
15,2 Low standard of funding for those on the parish. (4-4)
16 Peace of quill, possibly hers, with a foot on either side. (10)
18 Novel Doris produced, not in novel form? (3,7)
19,1D When to eat 1 across, between ourselves. (4-4)
21 Ban with dons first in support: it's moved on. (12)
24 Urge single member onto railway. (5)
25 Cattle with cat I left out due to motion. (9)
26 Complaint of repetitive singer. (6)
27 Any liking for the establishment? Do it against one's will. (3,5)

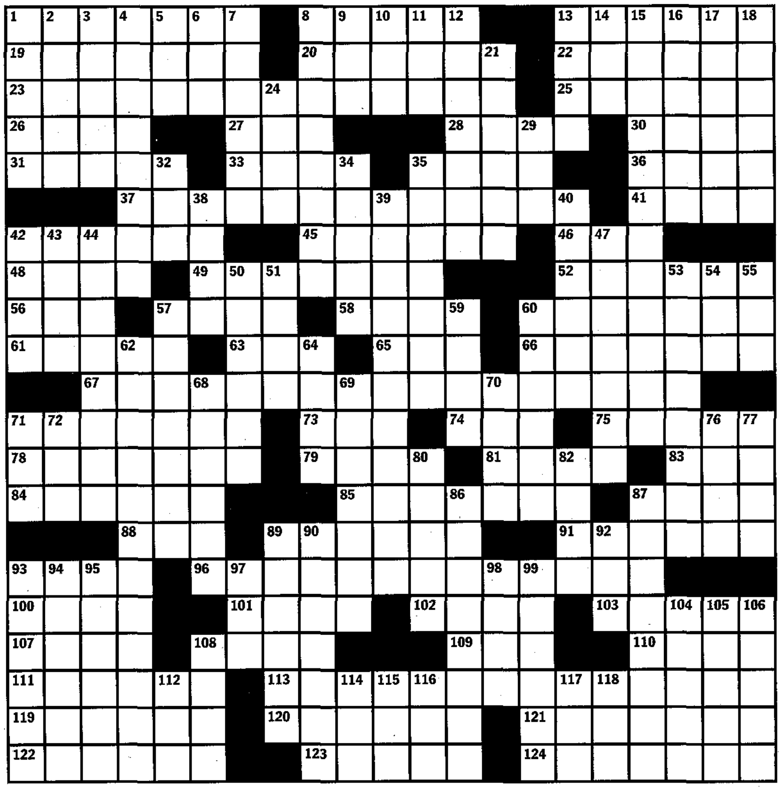


DOWN
1 See 11 and 19.
2 See 15.
3 Model up front: it's worth 25 cents. (3-3)
4 Awkwardly placed, like 20 6's dispatches? (2,1,5,5)
6 See 20.
7 Lingerie girl reported pressing on regardless. (10)
8,14 Assent on 6: let in one climbing in to resist chief policeman. (10,4,6)
10 Programmes that give us nice Tor. and Dean. (5,8)
13,14 Dissent on 6: pop round to police trap, possibly. (2,2,1,5,4,6)
17 Labour man and woman with different 23s. (8)
20,6 Journalist put to war work (in Waugh work). (4,2,3,5)
22 Trauma less than frightening at hill-top. (4)
23 Key to odd characters in culture. (4)

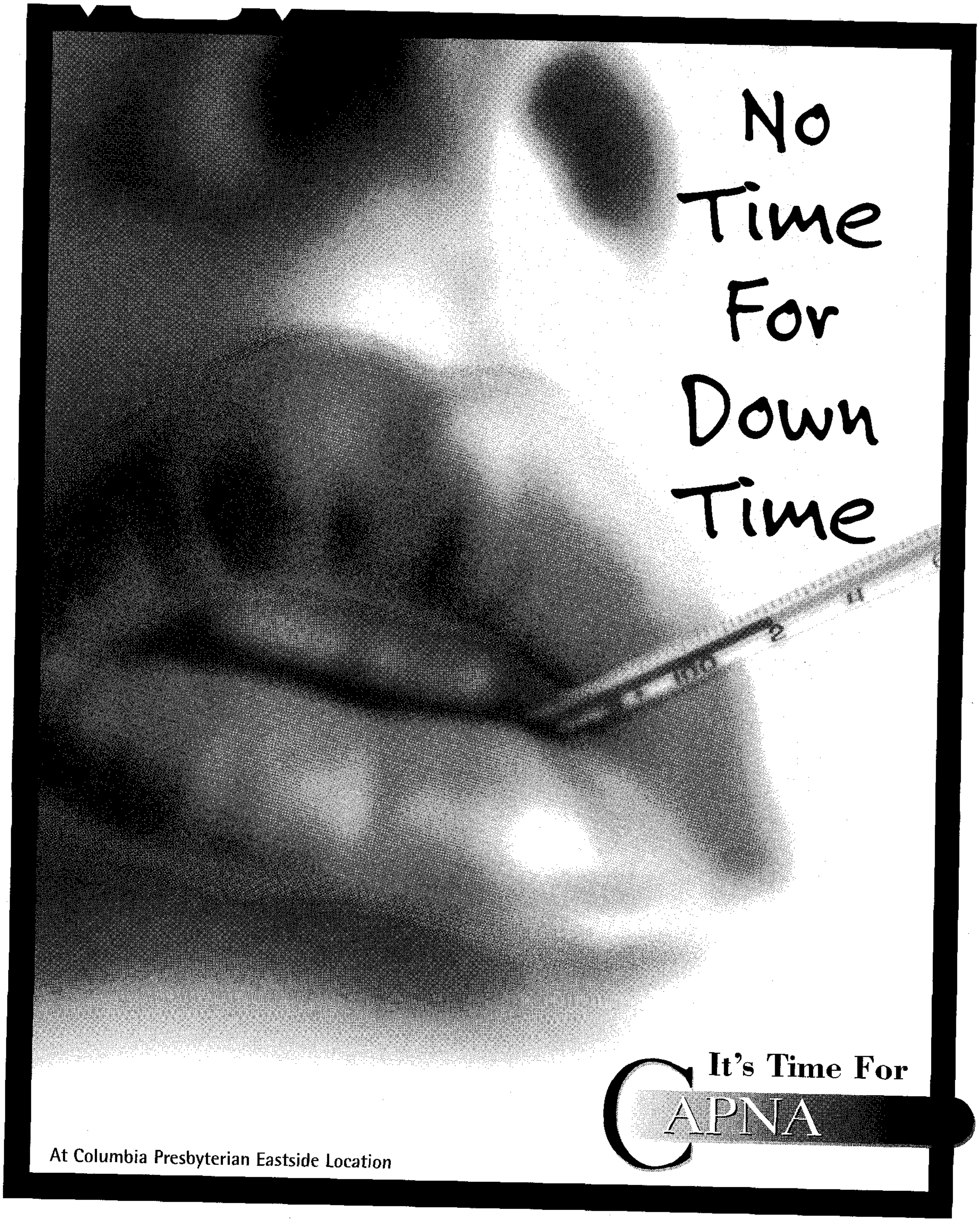
'Dysfunctional Families: 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS
1 Fell over
8 Entreaties
13 Boxer, at times
19 Musical "sweet potato"
20 Tenant
22 Having a sharp point
23 Picabo's battling family?
25 Took time out
26 Arrived
27 B.S.A. member
28 Sherbets
30 Villain's adversary
31 First Vice-President
33 City north of Rheims
35 Icky stuff
36 Decline gradually
37 Tyrone's unsuccessful family?
41 Colors
42 See 93-Across
45 New York's —— (the N.Y.P.D.)
46 —— mode
48 Tyler and Ullmann
49 Having feelings
52 Football position
56 Took in calories
57 Half a California city
58 Fly in the face of
60 More choosy
61 Succinct
63 U.K. medal
65 Be remorseful
66 Highly concentrated, as light
67 Laurence's unneighborly family?
71 "The Faerie Queene" poet
73 I, to Claudius
74 Objective
75 Jacob's eighth son
78 Library habitués
79 Type of palm
81 Peacock's pride
83 U.N. agcy.
84 Short-range passenger plane
85 Hotheads' traits
87 —— facto
88 Baton Rouge coll.
89 Fearmonger
91 Opticians' stock
93 With 42-Across, a Canadian province
96 Martin's cocaine-using family?
100 Scottish singles
101 Away from the wind, at sea
102 Practice prizefighting
103 Direct the car
107 Gael
108 In among
109 After an aitch
110 Jai's go-with
111 Equestrians
113 Neil's knife-wielding family?
119 Catch in a sting
120 Pepper with bullets
121 Province of Cuba
122 Retorts insolently
123 Feudal thralls
124 Uptightness

DOWN
1 Puccini opera
2 Sequence of eight
3 Cheese city of Italy
4 Takes over exclusively
5 Pinocchio's offense
6 Tolkien creature
7 Work at superficially, with "in"
8 Pre-championship games
9 Ayres who played Kildare
10 Course for immigrants: abbr.
11 Mrs. Gynt
12 Of grave importance
13 Glass vessels
14 Tennis feat
15 Jeb's violent family?
16 Boat on the Seine
17 Evermore, poetically
18 Changes the decor
21 Male chaperon
24 Lion's greeting
29 Stretch the resources, with "out"
32 ——-disant (self-styled)
34 Water nymph
35 Jubilant
38 Sinatra's "It —— Very Good Year"
39 Trespassers
40 Feeding to the full
42 Bed rail
43 Quote as reference
44 Get an unintended earful
47 Pertaining to milk
50 Senior generation
51 Like a snoop
53 Affinities
54 Guitarist Paul
55 Afore
57 Slayer of Medusa
59 "Judge not that —— not judged"
60 Ancient "Odes" poet
62 George's explosive family?
64 Westerns writer Wister
68 Against
69 Stir up
70 Upfront bet
71 Former senorita: abbr.
72 Architect of Rock-and-Roll's Hall of Fame
76 Ultimatum word
77 Certain marsupials, for short
80 Revival-meeting shouts
82 Archipelago unit
86 Gases used as fuel
87 Establishes in office
89 Not liquids
90 Opposite of debits
92 Voiced hesitations
93 Oyster-shell linings
94 —— million
95 South African grasslands
97 Melodramatic performer
98 "Atlas Shrugged" author
99 Fabric similar to jerse
104 Greek mother of a 1985 film
105 Give —— (listen)
106 Already up
108 Killer snakes
112 Actress Charlotte
114 "Right you ——!"
115 Damage
116 Wide of the mark
117 Suffix for dent or ven
118 Pewter component



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 8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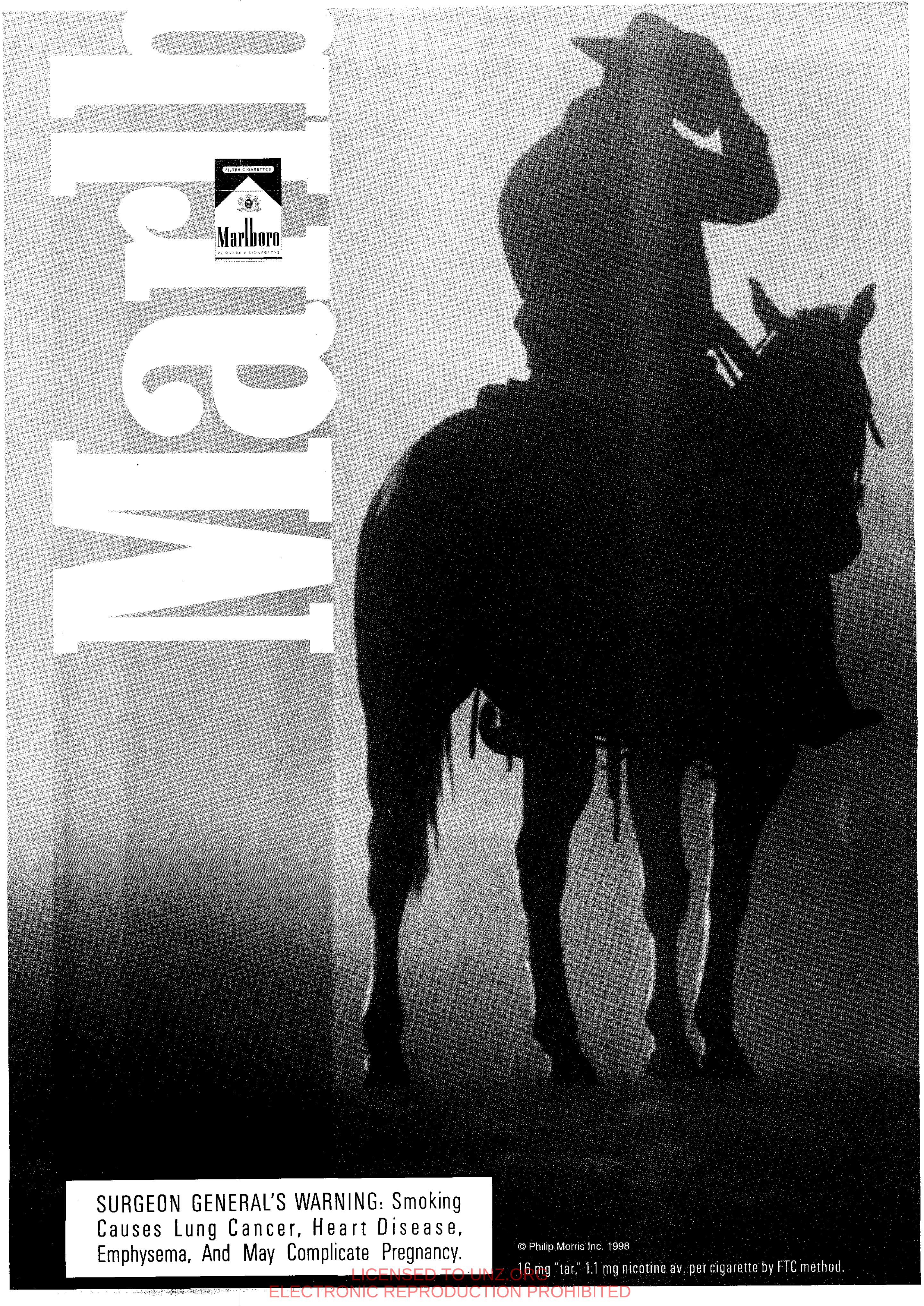
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